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The adverse conditions which make the teacher's role difficult and the steps taken in solving these situations are discussed. The means by which some teachers have surmounted their crowding and space problems may be helpful to others faced with similar difficulties. Ways to reduce crowding so that children can have the best possible environment for learning are presented. Over seventy photos, line drawings, and descriptions of ways to arrange rooms with centers of interest for science, art, dramatics, library and others are included. Space-savers which teachers have designed and found to be efficient are shown. Photographs show furniture arrangements which allow children freedom to move about and participate in a variety of interest centers. (RK)

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# Space, Arrangement, Beauty in School

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# Space, Arrangement, Beauty in School

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**Bulletin 102**

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MARGARET RASMUSSEN, *Editor*

HAZEL F. GABBARD, *Executive Board Adviser*

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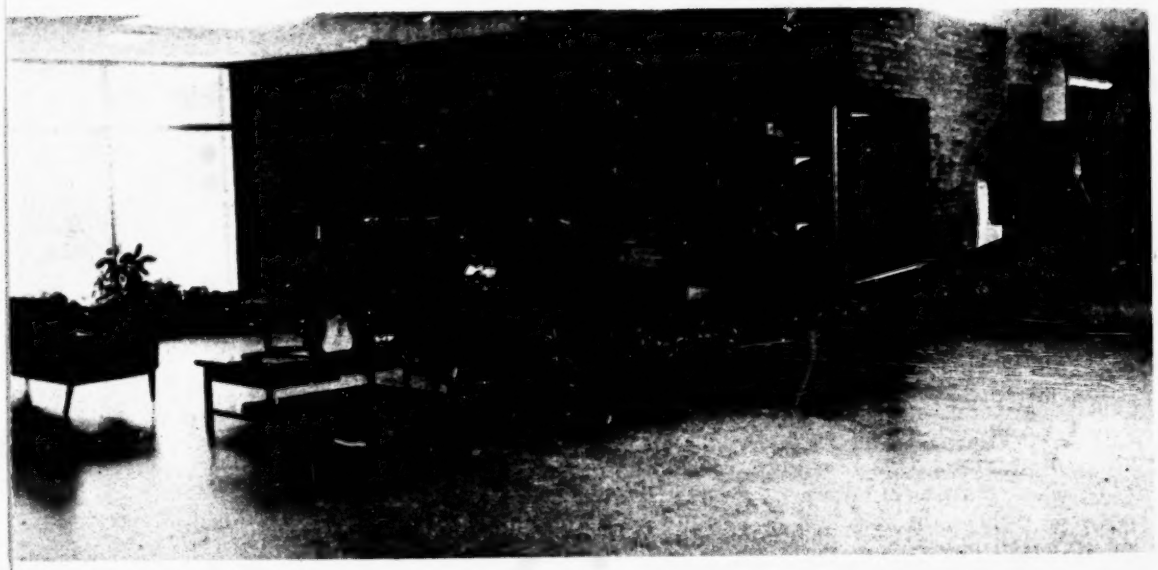


A cheerful lobby can be more than an entry hall to welcome visitors to a school. It can be used for parent conferences, as the teachers' lunchroom and meeting room and as a comfortable place before the fireplace for the children's story hour. Note the corner display cupboards.

# Foreword

HAZEL F. GABBARD

IN PLANNING NEW SCHOOLS OR RECONDITIONING OLD BUILDINGS, MAJOR consideration is given to space, arrangement and beauty. Each of these factors helps to make the school environment good for children. Lack of attention in planning for these factors may create blocks to learning which reduce the quality of education and contribute to an unwholesome atmosphere.

Among the conditions teachers report which handicap them in teaching, these top the list: too many children in too little space; mobility of many families, causing children to be insecure and to have gaps in their education; parent expectations for the child's achievement which are often unrealistic and beyond the ability of the child; the teacher's heavy load in school and after school hours; lack of instructional materials to meet the needs of children at different levels in each classroom; conflicts arising over the

crowded curriculum and the objectives in education. Taking all these problems into account, one may conclude that teaching is not easy today.

In this bulletin we have kept in mind the adverse conditions which make the teacher's role difficult, but our focus is on teachers who take a positive look at their problems and try to solve frustrating situations. Ways some teachers have surmounted their crowding and space problems may be helpful to others faced with similar difficulties.

Construction of new school facilities is making it possible for many teachers and children to experience the physical joys of space, light and color. New schools with movable furniture encourage rearrangement to carry out a variety of activities; classrooms with exits to grassy plots extend the play and work areas beyond the regular classroom; step-savers of many kinds are built in or are mobile; sinks with water fountains, cupboards, bulletin boards and storage closets are further aids to order and efficiency.

Despite the large-scale building of new schools across the country, classrooms are often overcrowded with children as soon as they are opened. Double and triple sessions are being used far too frequently to meet the emergency as large enrollments descend upon the schools.

Old buildings are also undergoing some face-lifting, resulting in more light, color and conveniences found in the new buildings. These changes help to make them functional and comfortable. While remodeling is a stop-gap, it is easing the race for buildings to keep ahead of the boom in children.

Steps taken by teachers to reduce crowding so that children could have the best possible environment for learning are the stories told throughout these pages. From teachers' notebooks, drawings and pictures, we share with you many suggestions and ideas which have been tried and tested. This bulletin contains over seventy photos and line drawings and descriptions of ways to arrange rooms with centers of interest for science, art, dramatics, library and others. Space-savers which teachers have designed and found to be efficient are shown. A guide for displaying children's work on bulletin boards and in exhibits will provide tips to attractive ways to add beauty to the school. Photographs show furniture arrangements which allow children freedom to move about and participate in a variety of interest centers.

The teachers who have shared their ideas on ways to relieve crowding and set up good room arrangements for children's learning have tried to jump hurdles and present better classroom environment. They have sought arrangements which were flexible, introduced touches to beautify and make more attractive the physical setting. As they have worked to make the classroom a good place to live, they have invited the children to join them in planning and working out better room arrangements. Undoubtedly the children's ideas and participation have made the school a better place for them.

# Schoolroom Arrangement: Its Meanings

Articles Coordinated by CHARLOTTE B. WINSOR

## Teacher — Planner of the Nursery School

CLARA COBLE

*" . . . planning can help to keep the atmosphere tone healthy and reduce group over-stimulation."*

WHEN THE NURSERY SCHOOL TEACHER VIEWS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE physical environment to the wholeness of her offerings, she is impressed with its basic importance. This perspective enables her to use space with its supportive equipment and materials as part of an effective means to an end: to enable each child to take on increasing strengths.

The competent nursery school teacher is cognizant of the intrinsic value of long-range goals for each child and of her own role in bringing these about. She knows she must give

. . . opportunities to gain knowledge about the world and its many inter-relationships;

. . . response to the event of the moment—the blooming narcissus, the newly-found spiderweb, the falling snow, the hurt feelings;

. . . zestful interest in helping her children to build within themselves a liking for music, stories, poetry;

. . . experiences with raw materials in a variety of forms—colors, sand, earth, wood, water, seeds;

. . . support in helping children to further personal relationships and to take on controls—to experience sound use of authority and freedom.

The nursery school teacher, through the combinative nature of these offerings, enables children to organize and integrate ideas, to mobilize and discipline feelings, to take in new learnings and experience new relationships.

In order to be this responding teacher, she must be in command of resources, keeping in mind that her effectiveness is partly dependent on the timing of her response as well as the nature and presentation of her offerings. Running through the whole is her sensitive awareness that the child's way of learning is a slow process and the teacher's continuous positive support is a way of building greater strengths within the child.

In other words the teacher—well versed in scientific understanding of behavior, knowledgeable about the universe, alert to the sensory responses and interests of young children—to be fully effective must function with a sure-footed yet spontaneous style, having her response tailor made to child and moment. This is quite an order but possible!

The primary point of this article is to present and give purpose to the ways of managing the tangible supports and resources. Frequently the teacher falls short of her goals because she becomes bogged down with these tangibles. She becomes a "toter," a conveyer belt for shuttling materials to and from child and shelf, a picker-upper, a cleaner, a paint-mixer. At end of day she expresses frustration: "I'm just a housekeeper. I never have time to *teach*." Space, child-size furniture, equipment and a variety of enriching resources such as physical elements, natural phenomena, plants and creatures, raw materials, books, music, social relationships foster inventive, inquiring minds and develop pleasurable inner resources. The extent to which children can experience learnings from such resources depends in large measure on the teacher's understandings and personality and in part on the way she manages; sets her stage; puts the machinery in motion; organizes and administers space, tangibles, time.

A well-known architect, in planning a home to fit a family, requires the mother to keep a two-weeks' diary of all the family's goings-on. So an artist teacher, in planning functional use of space, needs to relate children's needs and kinds of activities to use of the space. Her focus is to make it functional for and by the children. Do some teachers unconsciously plan the room for their favorite time of day, their favorite activity? Do some just let a room "happen so"?

As an architect in initial planning keeps his perspective on the whole space in relation to use before carefully planning each part, so should the planner of the nursery school room. After the teacher has worked out the over-all design of space, she gives thought to the planning of each small part. As she plays around with ideas she keeps in mind the major goal: maneuvering environment to free her to carry out her guidance role. Accomplishment of this goal sets off a chain reaction of additional child gains at different levels. For example, carrying out the self-service idea of presenting materials to the child for his seeing, reaching and using is a way of fostering initiative, independent thinking and action. When the child is involved with the whole process of an activity from a child-initiated idea, organization of his selected materials, creative use of them, to cleaning and restoring to the ordered design, he has had a deeply strengthening experience. Such experience offers the fulfillment of a basic human need; namely, feeling one's own worth in a group by contributing to the common good. Positive experiences in helping to care for the things that give pleasure can at the preschool level help to do just this.

## Centers of Interest

In deciding on centers of interest, the teacher knows it is important to provide for a range of possible experiences that will enable each child to respond according to interest and need. These will include experiences that are active or quiet, cooperative or individual, role-playing, creative, problem solving and mentally stimulating. Such a combination of choices not only gives purpose and strength to child involvement but serves as supportive to the teacher. Most children are enabled on their own to maintain a balance between activity and rest and to sustain self-directed interest, thus freeing the teacher to mind the needs of "fringe" children. Such planning can help to keep the atmosphere tone healthy and reduce group over-stimulation.

In deciding on best use of space the teacher should be mindful of the natural flow of children's play, the variety of "times for" throughout the day, the need for flexible use and the flow of one activity to another. Especially should she be mindful of those times when children need to be alone. Such recognition can help the teacher plan appropriately for the nooks that invite such refreshment.

## Guide for Setting Up Functional Room

These specific suggestions are offered as a guide for the teacher to use in setting up a functional room:

. . . Ratio between adults and children determines the way areas are set up as well as choice of activities to be offered.

. . . Planning should relate to children's needs in the total day's program: play and work times, transition times, eating and resting.

. . . Areas should be set up with such clarity that they are suggestive of the activities.

. . . Areas for interrelated activities such as woodworking, block-building, housekeeping should be arranged near each other. Such arrangement encourages a natural flow of progressive play as well as experience in using new combinations of materials, all of which broaden children's learning.

. . . Arrangement should provide for flexible use of room. Areas that lend themselves to mobility can be adjacent, allowing for space to be increased according to children's interests.

The whole process of each activity needs consideration in planning the placement of materials. Some simple reminders may be worthy of note:

. . . Equipment and materials that require close eye work need to be in best light. . . . Creative arts and block-building areas need protection from traffic. . . . Areas for quiet activities should be arranged together; areas for noisy activity, together. . . . To insure successful use of materials, they should be appropriate and in good condition.

# Kindergarten-Primary Rooms That Reflect Interests

VIVIENNE HOCHMAN

*"A room efficiently organized in terms of space, orderliness, comfort and convenience gives the children better opportunity for working effectively and creatively."*

NEW SCHOOLROOMS ARE DESIGNED AND EQUIPPED TO MEET PRESENT-DAY educational concepts of a functional workshop in which children as well as teachers are active participants. Many old schools are being modernized to approximate these demands. Kindergartens, even with basic requirements of space, movable furniture, varied material and generous storage space, still need reorganization in light of newer program concepts. First- and second-grade classrooms in many schools still cannot be distinguished from a secondary school lecture hall except for the smaller size of the fixed-to-the-floor combination desks and seats and the narrower aisles.

The need to transform these rooms into workshops poses a complex problem. We have to deal both with rearrangement of space and with introduction of new materials. The teacher's acceptance of such reorganization as workable and necessary is basic to successful implementation of change. Also, the supervisor needs to be a supportive figure willing to cope with the custodian's resistance to extra cleaning chores and fears of "fire hazards" in every new piece of play or art equipment. These factors make the arrangement of rooms in schools a highly individual accomplishment of teachers and children.

The need of kindergarten-primary children for interaction through dramatic play, art experiences and communication may be met by thoughtful teachers even in limited schoolroom settings. Lowering sights from the ideal and perfect and applying ingenuity and hard work to the task can make any room functional and attractive.

## New Concepts of Room Arrangement

The following presentation describes some recently tested equipment, successful room organizations and program patterns that were initiated as a result of newer concepts in room arrangements.

Sometimes it appears necessary to provide a laboratory outside the classroom in which teacher and children can familiarize themselves with new materials, equipment and techniques. In one school, we equipped a room with blocks, paints, clay, a "store" and materials for housekeeping play. In another school, a room was equipped with simple science materials, plants,

sensory science equipment and a choice of water experiences. In a third, we experimented with simple school-made structures, big enough for the children to go in and out of, which represented a store, a restaurant, a library, a post office, etc. In each case a teacher and her class could use this room on a regular basis as supplementary work space to her own room. When its usefulness was over, the materials were divided among the classrooms as a start in building up play equipment. This seems a very significant and successful transition step in the development of attitudes and techniques when dramatically new materials are being introduced. It serves, too, to meet a more practical need. Materials are scarce and in this way many classes can use the same materials at different times.

**Mobile Units**

A mobile cooking unit is another demonstration of shared equipment. Here equipment is brought into the classroom. This mobile cooking unit is wheeled into any classroom on one floor of a school as it is needed. The cart is a utility table (wood or metal) which carries a full complement of pans and kitchen cutlery which a teacher may need for a simple baking or cooking experience. It has in addition an electric hot-plate, plastic cups, bowls and flatware. The function of such equipment is to stimulate the teacher's interest in the activity by making it convenient to use without expending too much individual effort, expense or room space.

Other mobile units that work especially well are carts equipped with either a great number of special library books or with a record player and records. If these had to be duplicated in each classroom, it would be expensive and perhaps prohibitive.

**More Space Provided**

Here are some of the basic changes in old-type classrooms. Wherever it is practical (ratio of children to seats) rows of desks are removed. The resulting space may be utilized for work areas according to shape and size. Some rooms are equipped with tables and chairs and often these fill the entire space. In the revised program, all the children are not required to read, draw or write simultaneously. That being the case, it is sufficient to retain a minimum number of tables, using where necessary those that are part of the housekeeping play, the library or others. Available, of course, are enough chairs for all the children. In this way, space is provided for rhythms, block play, games, as well as for the construction of other play areas and for closer grouping of children for stories, discussions or singing.

Wall space, too, may be used in creative ways. Slate blackboards covered in suitable materials provide space for more individual painters, or for a group doing a scenic backdrop or for a bulletin board.

**Room Dividers and Scrolls for Dramatic Play**

It is desirable to separate working areas in a room in order to protect the purposeful activity of the children. A room efficiently organized in terms of space, orderliness, comfort and convenience gives the children better opportunity for working effectively and creatively. Traditionally, only the outer edges of the room are given consideration, but it is the total space which should be planned for.

This suggests the need for room dividers. Simple, inexpensive, sturdy room dividers can set off the area used for housekeeping play and other play space. These wall-dividers can be moved easily to change the arrangement of the room. If space is limited so that construction of a miniature replica of a neighborhood or a farm or a table or floor scene cannot be readily set up, a large square of composition board laid across a few desk tops, on saw-horses, or on block supports will serve as a temporary foundation. If space does not permit the "building" of a store, house, bus or post office, the dramatic use of a "play scroll" is often very effective. A large piece of muslin or reinforced strong paper is decorated to resemble the front of the structure with doors and windows cut through. Suspended across the corner of the room, it provides a place into which the children can go. They can actually walk through the "door" and peer through the "window." Chairs for the bus seats, a counter and food boxes for the store may be carried behind the "front"; when play is over, it may be rolled up. Such material gives the children the necessary thrust toward constructive dramatic play.

A more permanent structure is a façade which has the added virtue of allowing itself to be used over and over again in many ways. This is constructed out of wooden boxes joined together to form two upright structures. A swinging wooden sign separates the two parts to form the doorway. As the space behind the façade is used differently, the sign above may be changed to read "super market" or "post office" or "library." Many other changes are possible.

These suggestions for equipment constructed by school personnel may, of course, be carried out with good commercial materials and be put together by professional workers. This will certainly add to their life and appearance and because of their basic simplicity will still serve a fine educational purpose. However, if finances prohibit such expenditures, homemade equipment will serve equally well if the materials are selected for sturdiness and sandpaper and paint are used generously. Often satisfaction derived from the process of construction will add to enjoyment of the completed product.

We are indeed fortunate that today's classrooms, like our homes, are expected to reflect the interests and talents of the people who live in them. What a wonderful opportunity for today's teachers and children to make classrooms respond to their "magic wands" of creativity and ingenuity!

# Organization and Arrangement for Middle Grades

ANNETTE FRANK

*"Children should have some voice in planning the room and some responsibility for housekeeping chores."*

AS THE CHILDREN MOVE UP THROUGH GRADES THREE TO SIX, THEY CAN assume real responsibilities and solve many new problems without feeling overburdened. They can to a great extent help create their own school world. They obtain satisfactions in social interchange on a new level. They develop a growing independence in the use of books, maps, pictures and other sources of information. Therefore, organization and arrangement of such materials are important factors in learning. It follows that children should have some voice in planning the room and some responsibility for housekeeping chores. Choice of color scheme, use of bulletin boards, arrangement of centers of interest should, by cooperative effort of teacher and class, produce an interesting, vital and esthetically satisfying environment.

### Expanded Space for Worthwhile Activities

Children in the middle years are eager for group activities but also need time to be by themselves in a "quiet place" apart from the group. A reading center can meet both needs and will have more meaning for the children if they have helped to choose the available books according to class interest and have helped to organize a place where they can go to read for pleasure, find information, engage in independent reading activities, record evaluations and progress. In addition to books, magazines and reading games, the reading center should feature a bulletin board to display individual reviews and stories, class charts, large envelopes for a picture file of the current social studies unit. If the room has movable furniture, more space can be allotted to the center which may also be used as a library and research corner. If the furniture is stationary, a word to the principal and the custodian often hastens the removal of a block of seats, freeing this space for a table, chairs or "orange-crate furniture." If this cannot be done, a few unoccupied seat units may be set aside and covered with attractive oilcloth to serve as "reading and puzzle seats." Action is natural for children. They need additional space to "move to" if the size of the room hampers mobility.

Middle grade children need opportunities to communicate within the limits imposed by the classroom. It is easier on occasion to function in a small group than in a class of 30 to 35 children. A teacher finds that centers of activity free him to work with a few children if he knows that the others have worthwhile activities to occupy them while waiting for his attention.

In addition to the reading center, a place should be set aside where a graphic record of current science activities can be kept and where materials are availabe for science experimentation. A place is needed for a child or a group of children to explore the *how*, the *what* and the *why* of things. If the science center is well structured by the teacher, if it is maintained and provocatively labelled by the children, if it shows evidence of curriculum stimulation, then it will help provide the framework for learning science concepts. A portion of the room should be equipped with shelves to hold an "odds and ends" box containing a variety of materials for exploration, simple science equipment, science books and magazines, evidence of a current class experience. The bulletin board should display questions raised by the children, records of class findings, related science pictures. This opportunity for direct experiences helps the growing child to understand his environment and to relate himself to it.

**Art and Dramatic Play Centers**

As children mature, they become more interested in their own potentialities. They will be encouraged to use paints, clay and other media when supplies are accessible, when their own creative expressions satisfy them, when their finished products are given proper display. A chest of drawers is excellent as a repository for a variety of media. If space is limited, a few shelves in the paper closet may be set aside and clearly labelled. A permanent easel standing on a piece of linoleum is preferable for painting, but a part of the blackboard covered with oilcloth or paper may also be used. Sometimes it is feasible to use corridors as extra work space. A taut string across the room and colorful clothespins can display paintings as they dry.

Window sills may be used as dioramas or "display windows" for the finished product with one section set aside for objects in work. Often these products are related to social studies and find their way to a dramatic play center where children may play out and record their learnings. These play centers may be a Dutch fireplace built on a part of the blackboard, or a large painted front of an igloo tacked across one corner of the room, or a simulated office of a travel bureau. An attractive play center in the middle grades as well as in the lower stimulates children to engage in dramatic play. Through this medium they can more easily identify themselves with persons and objects they have studied in various units of work. Often a façade of an Indian cave or a street, painted on wrapping paper and unrolled like a screen when needed, is all that is necessary to set the stage. Some older children find it hard to reveal attitudes and feelings. A box of props, a TV screen, a few puppets often encourage dramatic expression. A large closet or the hall can make rehearsing a private affair.

Teachers and children work best in a permissive atmosphere with known and accepted rules and with a proper time and place for everything. A well-organized room with cooperative relationships and emotional climate promotes maximum teacher effectiveness, flexibility and ease of operation.

# GRAPHIC SUGGESTIONS FOR
## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

### Room Arrangement

Space for Experiences

Arrangement should provide for flexible use of room, such as a temporary "chicken coop." Here the children can watch and feed the mother hen and the chicks.

The organization of this room provides space for storage of tools and wood and a work center for construction. After this activity the space becomes a center for dramatic play.

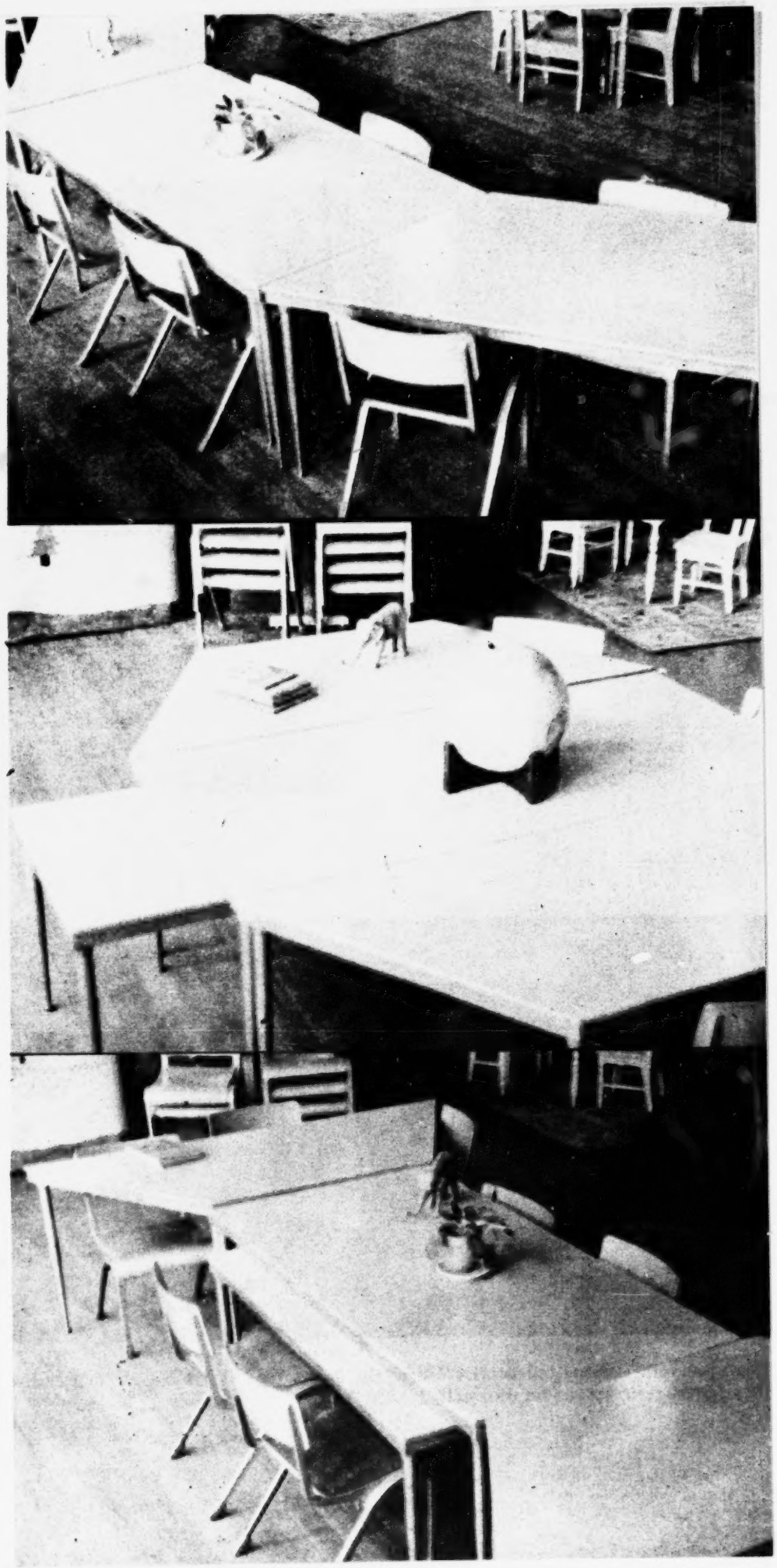
This room suggests that it is permissible to move around to interest centers; that self-selection of materials and independence in working alone or in a group are important.

This is where the truck got the wheat.
It is the granary
See the big silos where the wheat is stored
Do you know who stored their wheat in the

There is a need for interaction through dramatic play among young children. The floor becomes a part of equipment needed for a busy "street"—complete with tracks, cars and police at intersection. Wall space is a bulletin board.

This sixth-grade room arrangement helps children become a unified group, needed during discussion, reports, music and other times. Work areas, book shelves, display space, sink and bulletin boards are easily accessible.

School libraries can invite children to read for pleasure and information.



Tables of this shape make it possible for many pliable arrangements. Note how one table slides under a higher table.

## Outdoor Work Areas

Babies need their daily bath, and why not enlist "Daddy's" help?

A "cook out" belongs outdoors. Where else can you arrange for space for this activity?

What does it matter if bits of clay fall on the ground?

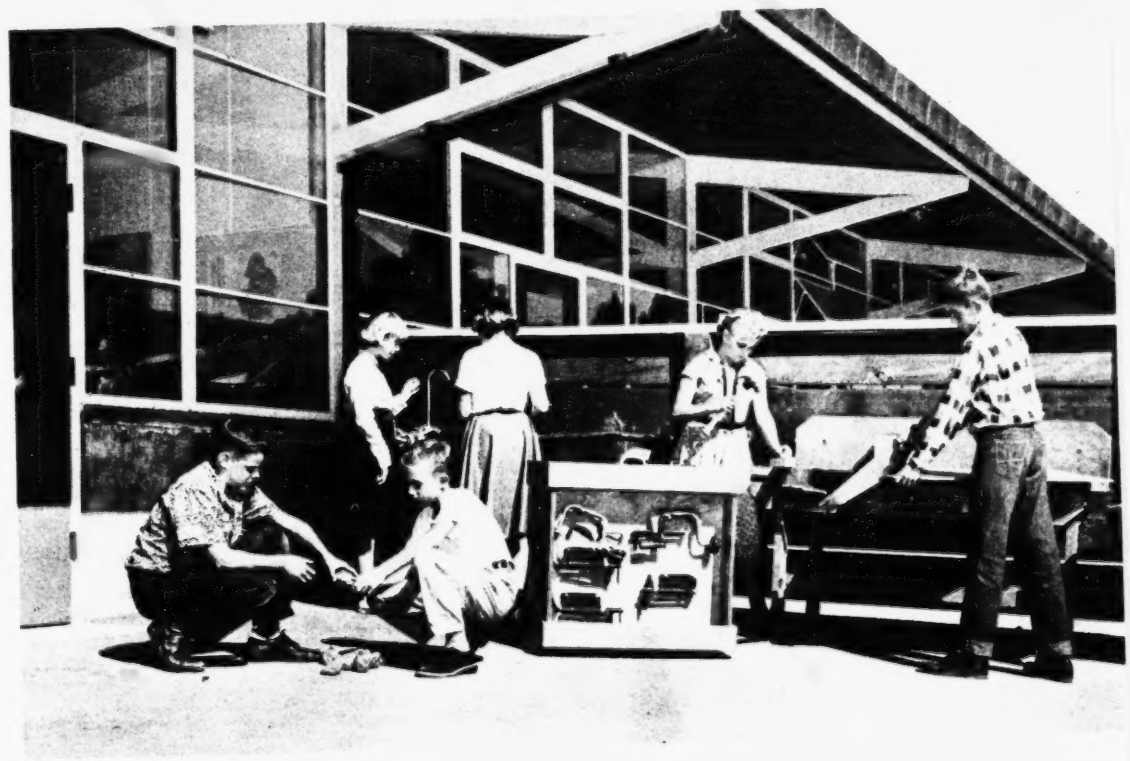
Working with hollow blocks creates no noise problem outdoors. Young children need many hours of activity in the fresh air. Note storage area for blocks.

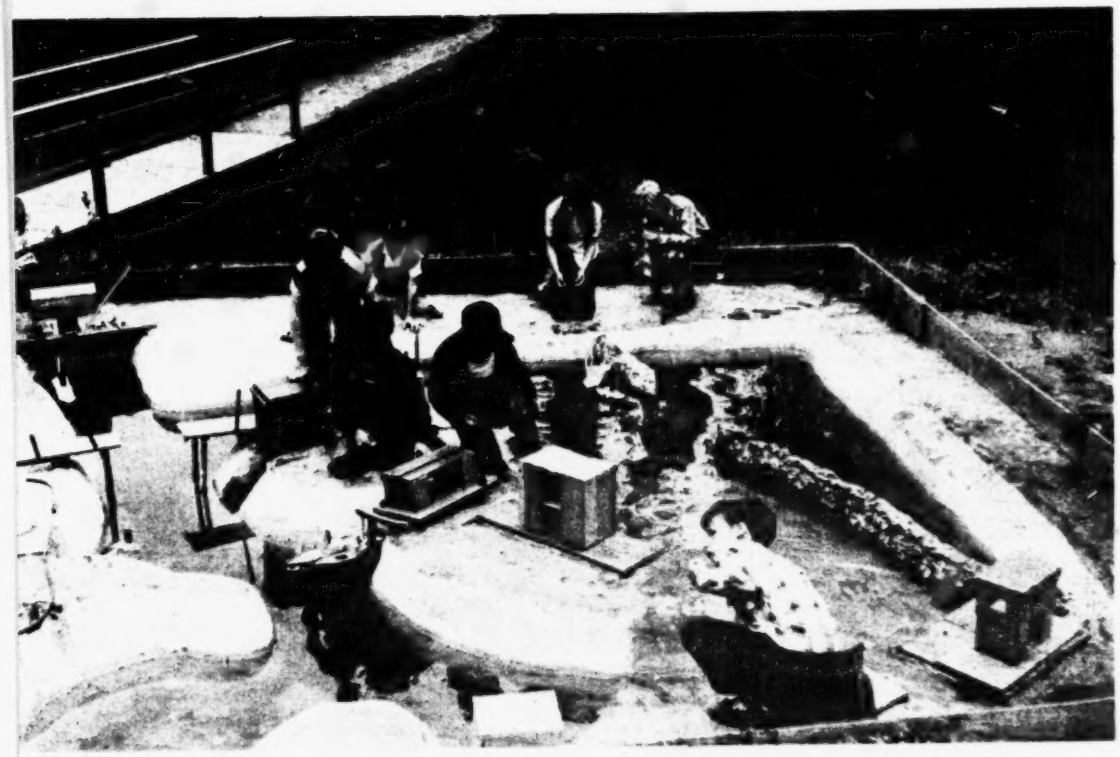
The architecture of this school provides for work space for many children directly outside of each classroom.

Using outdoor space for wood construction and painting "finished products" is possible in many schools. Note tool and wood storage chest made of a packing box.

Many activities are adaptable to work area outside the classroom.

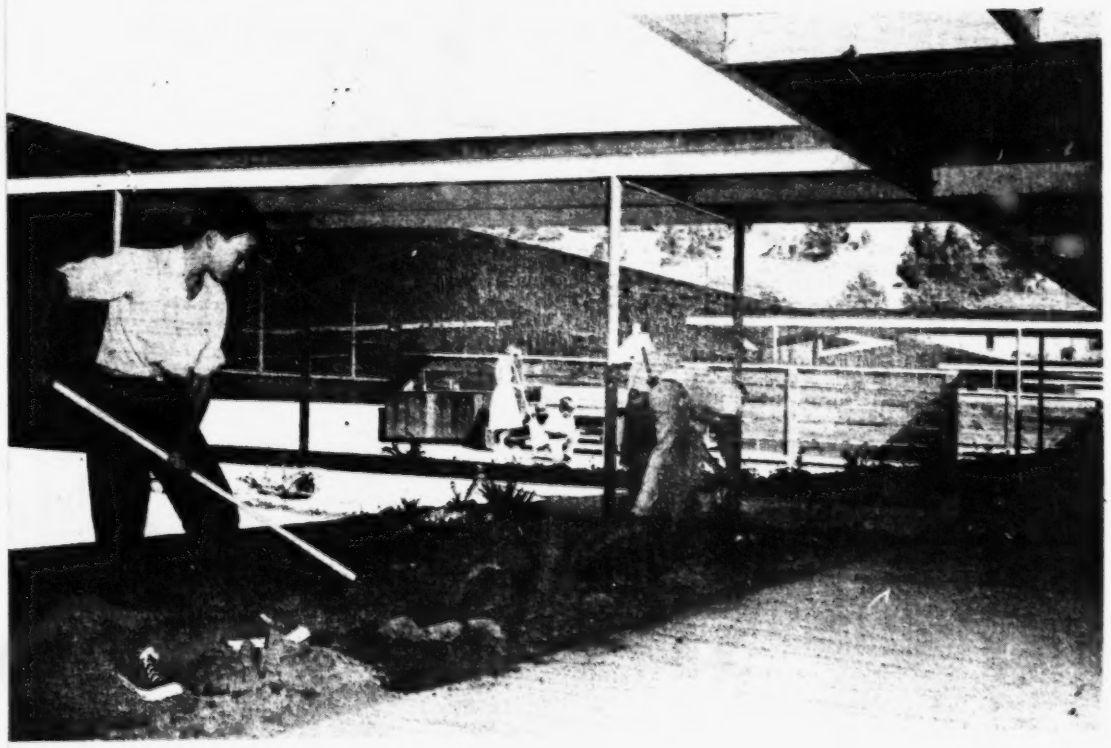
Social studies in intermediate grades are enriched by construction. Outdoors is the most suitable place for this activity. Note mobile tool rack.



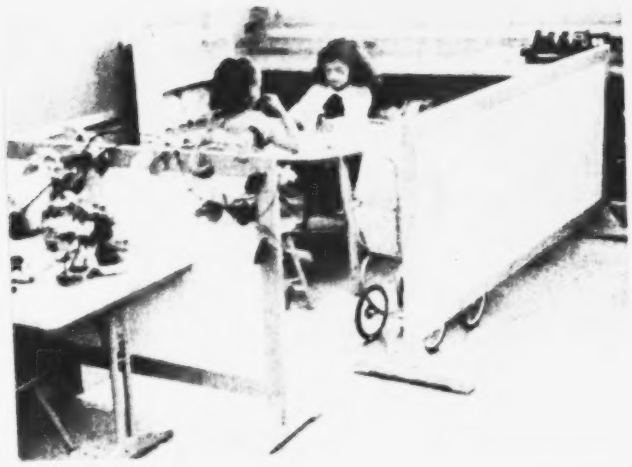


The use of water makes a transportation study more realistic to third graders.

Space for gardening in outdoor classroom.



## Centers of Interest

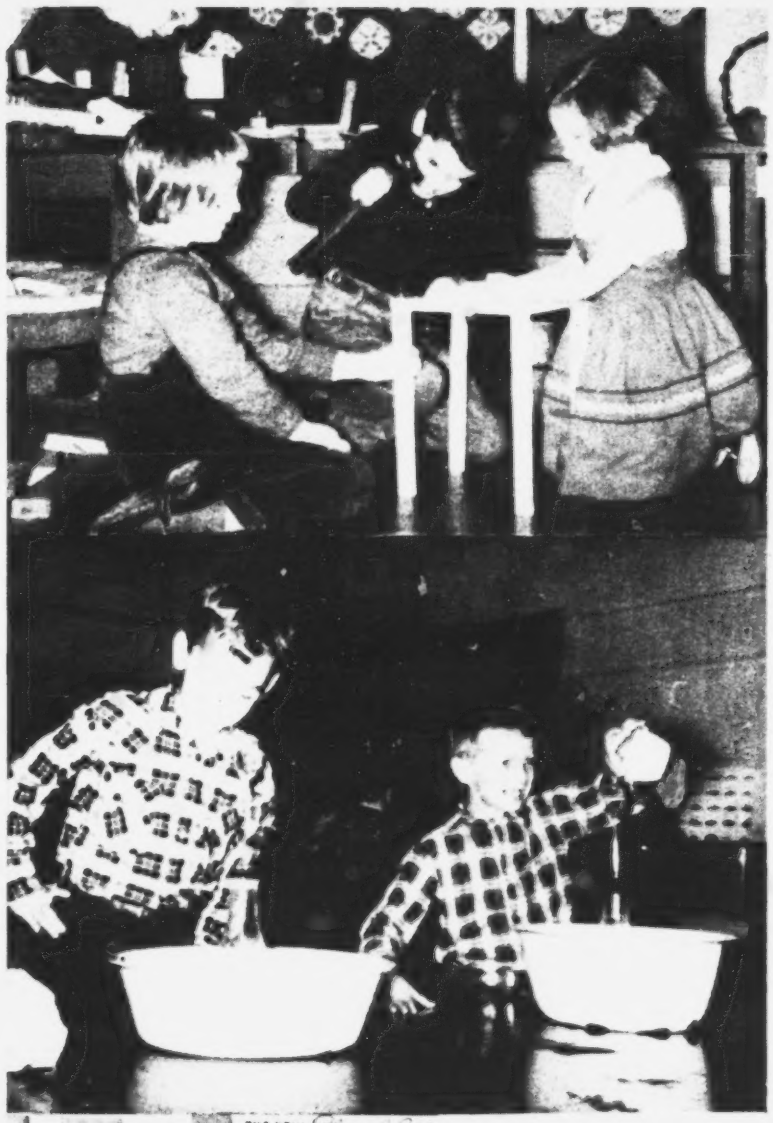


A doll corner for dramatic play

A quiet library corner for enjoyment of books

A music corner for listening to records

Space for painting



Making a table takes group cooperation, and the floor is the best place for it.

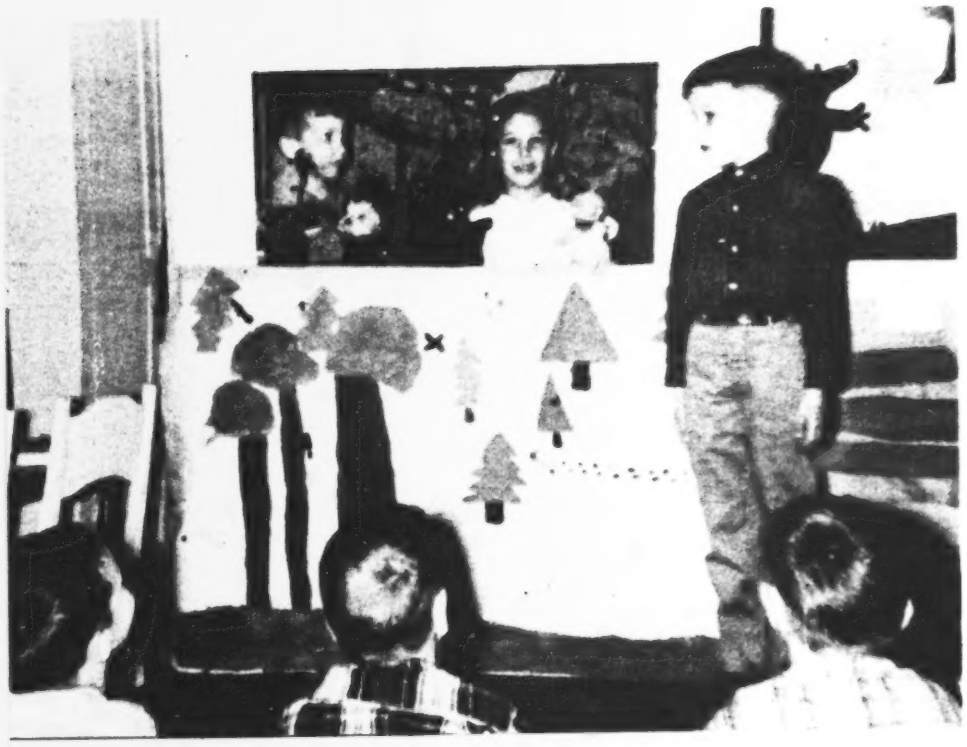
Space for science experiments

Space next to doorways can be made attractive by a display area with shelves to hold treasures brought or made by children.

Resource materials can be organized in files for ready reference.

A rack for books to be neatly displayed can be made by fathers.

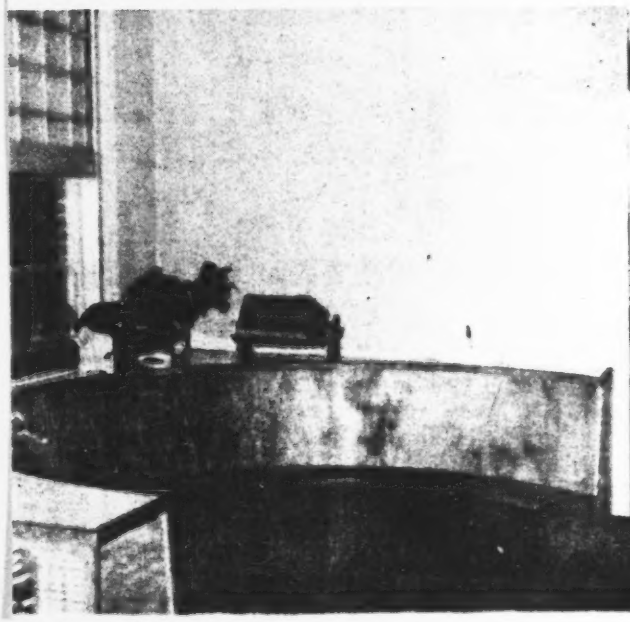
## Space-Savers

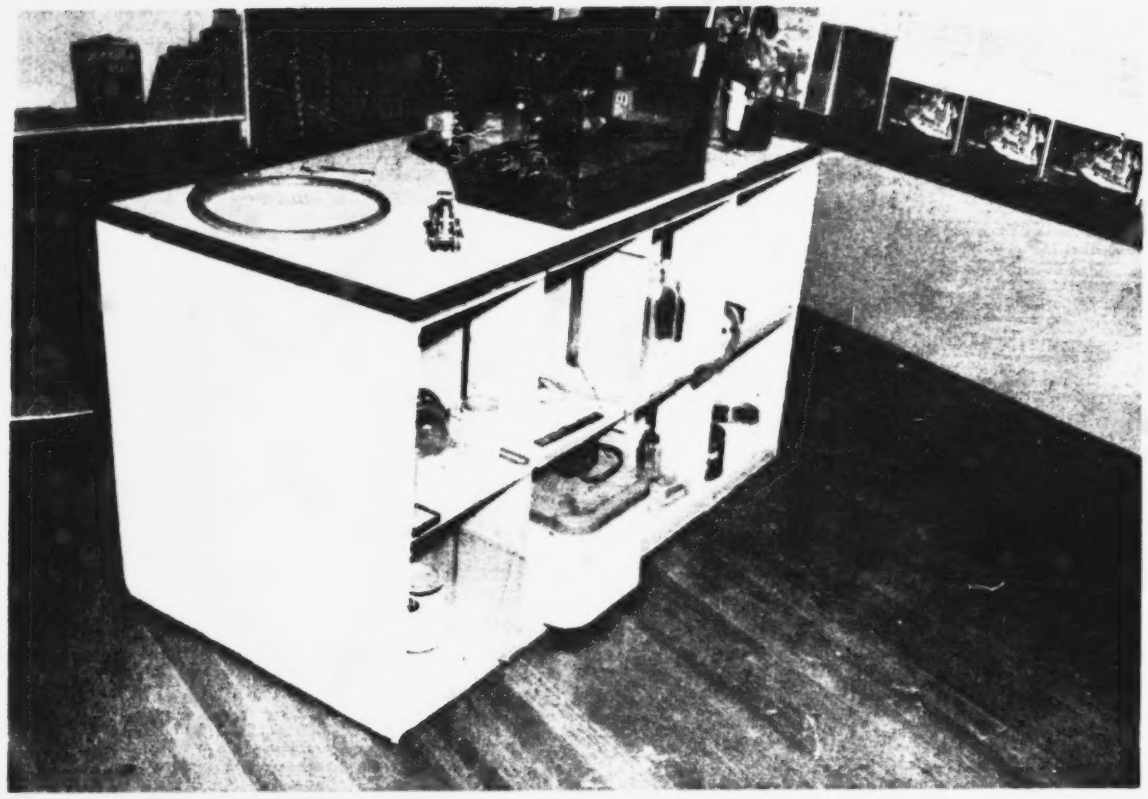


A homemade puppet stage can be converted into a store.

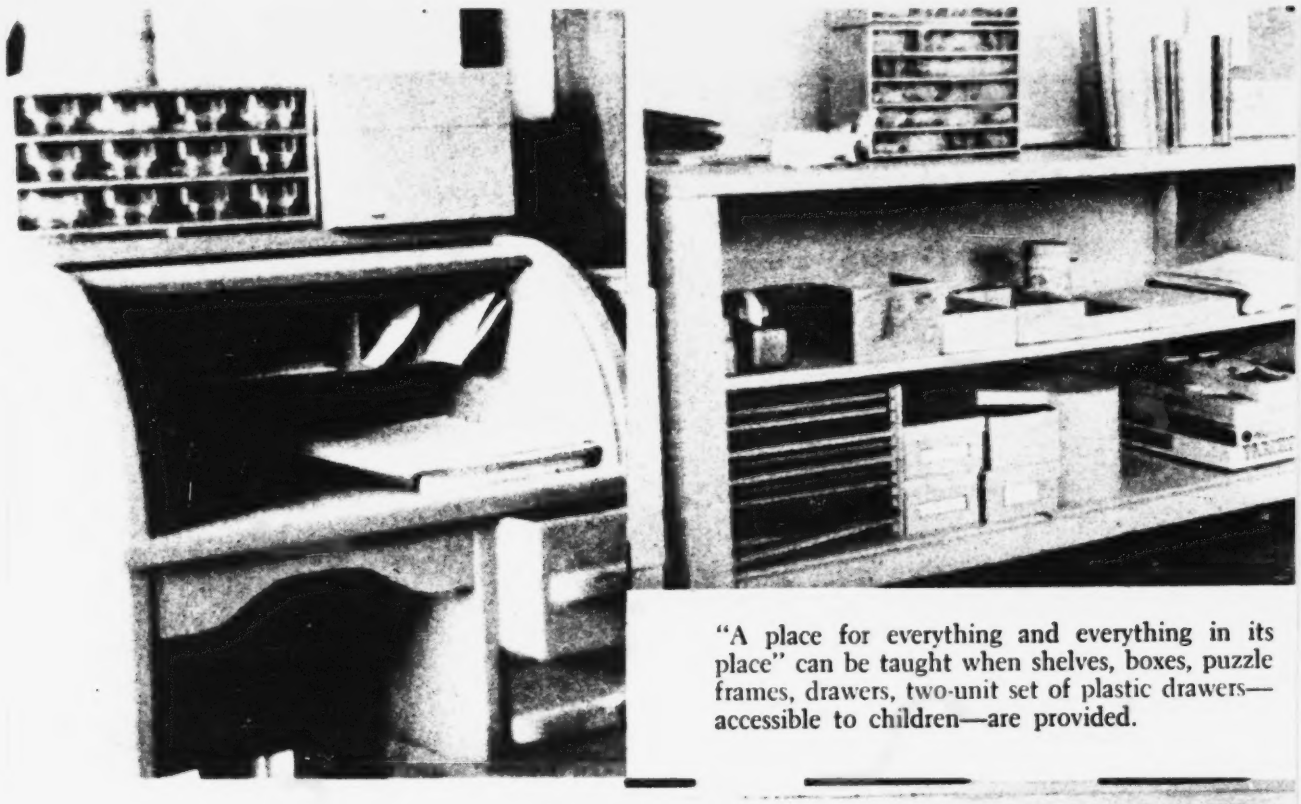
Stackable chairs give extra space for other activities.

This cozy corner can serve as a reading center (group or individuals), for committee meetings or for conversation. See where there is storage space for books.





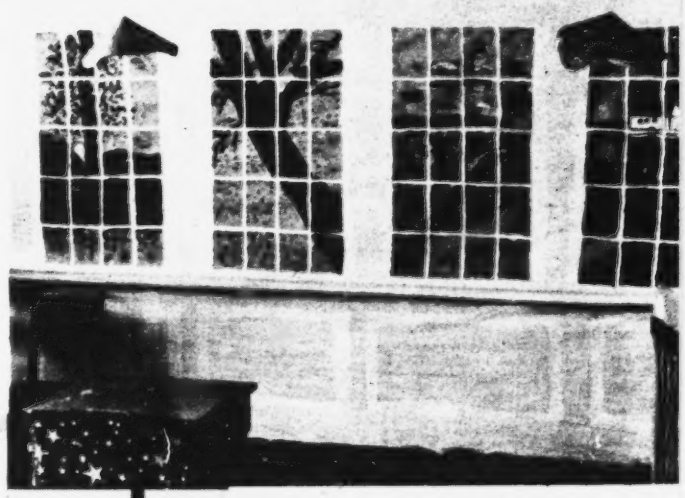
Movable science work and storage areas are made of eight orange crates held together by wall on the outside, topped with Formica, bound with metal strip and mounted on casters. They can serve as demonstration units. The wallboard becomes a bulletin board.

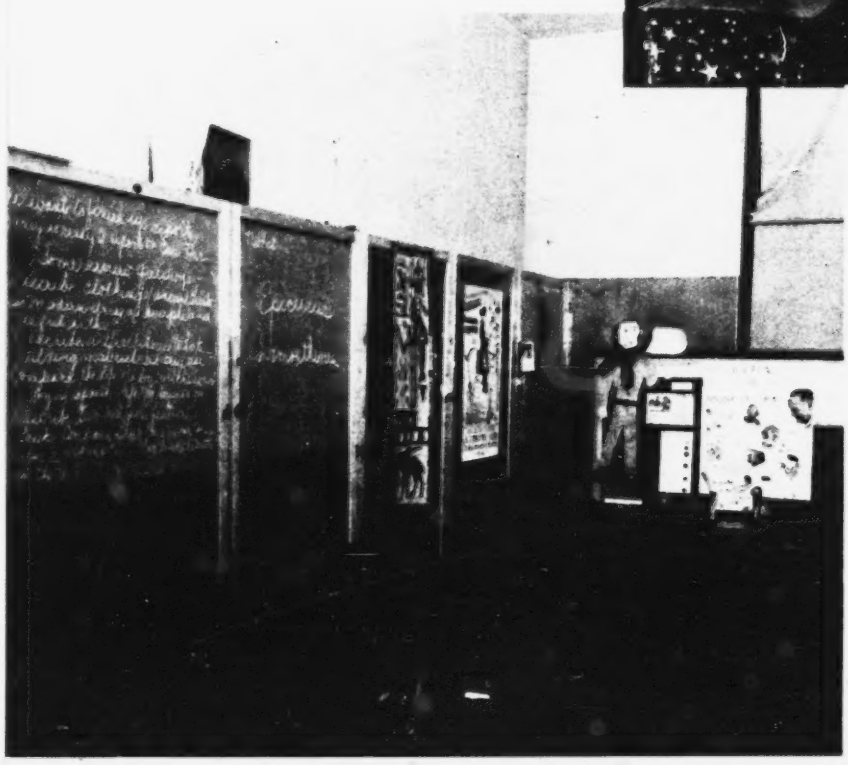


"A place for everything and everything in its place" can be taught when shelves, boxes, puzzle frames, drawers, two-unit set of plastic drawers—accessible to children—are provided.

Substituting a small desk for traditional teacher's desk gains space. Card file and set of plastic drawers are useful on top of desk.

This court scene for a play is at the end of the classroom.

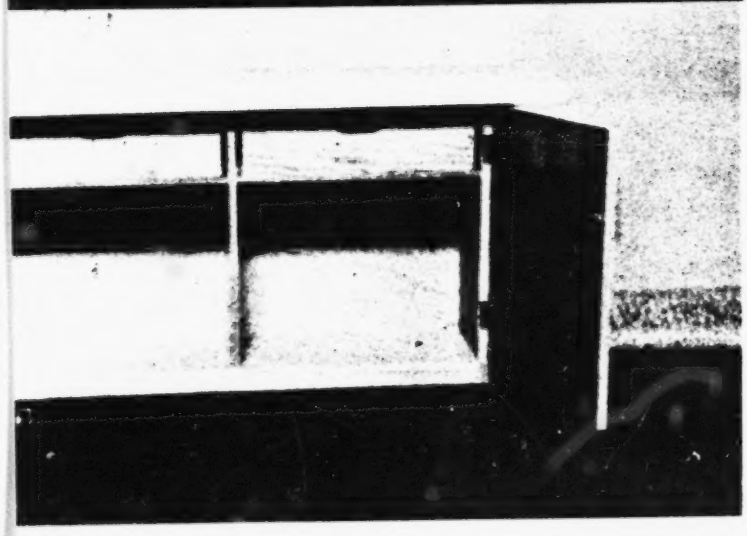




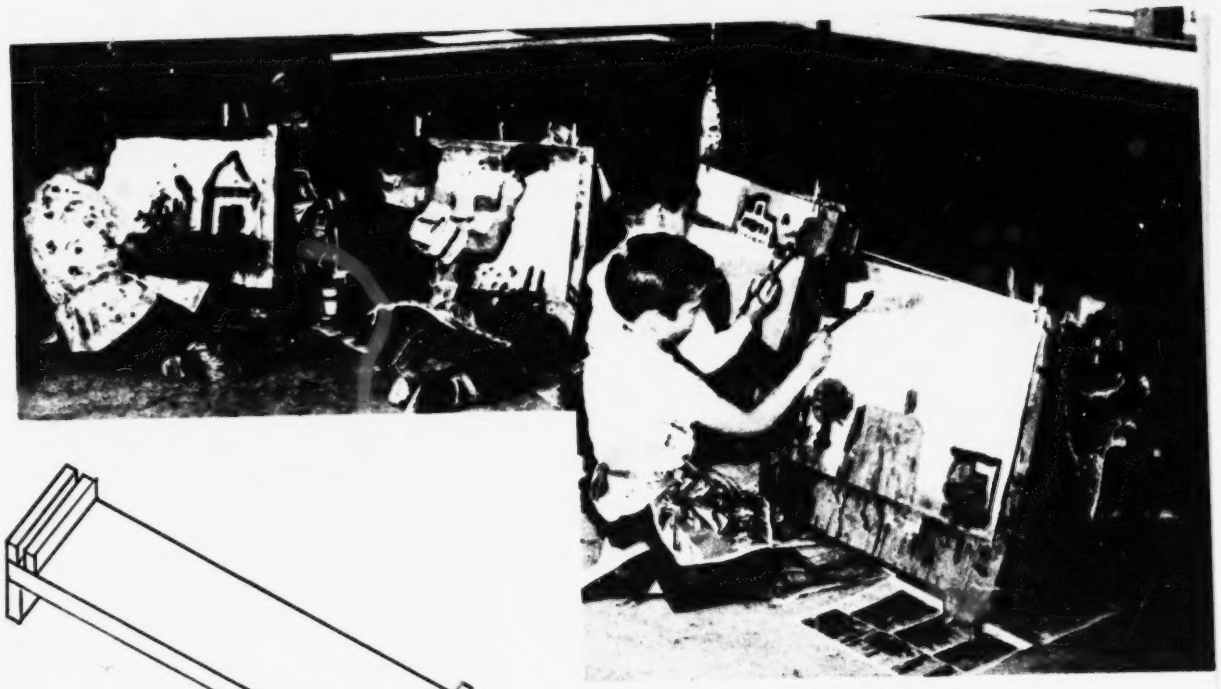
This storage room has been converted into work space. Masonite cabinet doors hide storage of books. Bottom half is varnished, top half painted with chalk board paint. Movable bulletin board, table, chairs complete furnishing.

Extra work space is provided by use of movable book cases backed with mounting board.

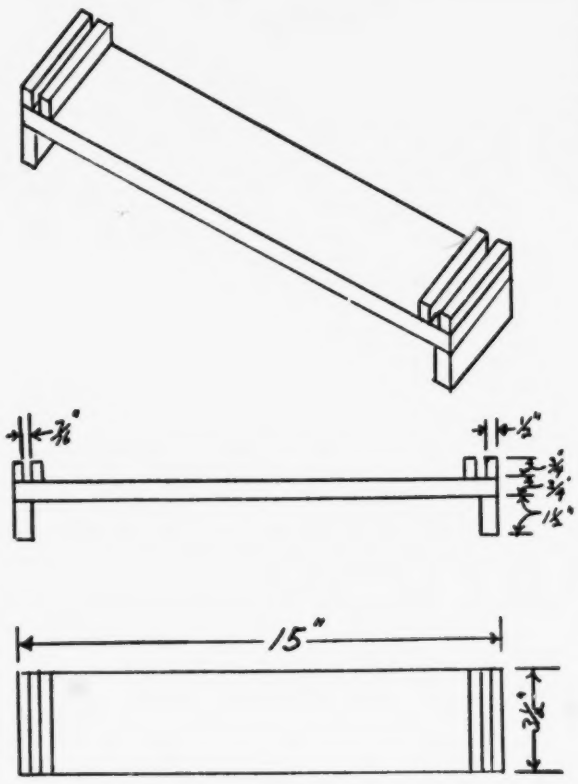
A mobile unit with clay and related materials and tools can be transported from room to room. A similar arrangement can be made for musical instruments, books, cooking and science equipment.



A portable cabinet (with casters) is practical for storage of science, cooking, art, craft or other materials. Top becomes a work space.



Homemade easels are inexpensive. Children can set up, use and later store in a small space.

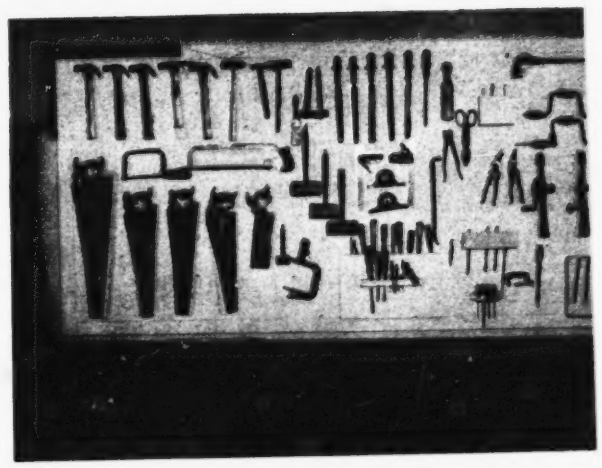



Materials List for Each Support:

¾" x 3½" x 15" Clear White Pine S4S (1)
¾" x 1½" x 3½" Clear White Pine S4S (2)
½" x ¾" x 3½" Clear White Pine S4S (4)
5 cc nails (6)
3 finish nails (12) Wood glue

Nail ¾ x 1½ pieces with 5 cc nails after glueing. Nail ½ x ¾ pieces with 3 finish nails after glueing. Supports should be sealed with a waterproof sealer or paint.

Easels are made of 24" x 28" pieces of ⅛" Standard Masonite or 3/16" Upson board or similar materials. If ¼" holes are drilled in all corners easel may be used either side up.



This tool board was made by the fathers working in the school shop. The school is open one evening each week for parent-teacher conferences and parent-interest groups. The fathers often work in the shop on classroom projects or on equipment for the school yard and garden.

# Bulletin Boards and Displays

## An Illustrated Guide

KENNETH M. LANSING

*"Change bulletin board displays frequently."*

CLASSROOM DISPLAYS PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE CREATION OF a wholesome classroom "climate." Therefore, they should be given careful attention.

The most common of all exhibition areas is the bulletin board. Classrooms are too often without a sufficient amount of such display space. If you are one of the unfortunate teachers who face this problem, we can make some suggestions that may help you. But first, let's talk about bulletin boards.

### Possible Items for Display

- spelling papers
- arithmetic papers
- reports
- booklets
- children's drawings and paintings
- science materials
- social studies materials
- masks
- sewing
- weaving
- collages
- hooked rugs
- paper sculpture
- murals
- textiles
- seasonal displays
- newspaper clippings
- magazine articles
- prints (pictures)
- maps

### Helpful Tools and Materials

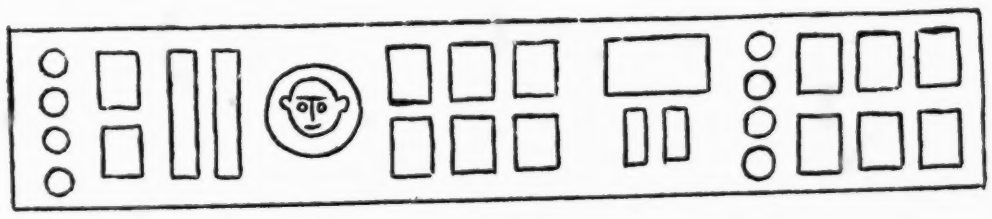
- all kinds of paper
- tinfoil
- aluminum foil
- paste
- airplane glue
- rubber cement
- wallpaper
- watercolor
- India ink
- boxes
- corrugated cardboard
- staplers
- pins
- yarn
- string
- rope
- tempera paint
- fabrics
- scrap
- chalk
- pens

## Responsibilities of the Children

The educational benefits obtained from bulletin board displays cannot be fully realized unless both the teacher and the children take the responsibility of creating exhibits. The purpose of the teacher's display may be instructional, motivational, decorative, or a combination of the three. The fact that children make an exhibit for fun does not reduce its educational value. They profit from seeing and handling interesting materials and from selecting and arranging articles for display. The children could also be given the responsibility of taking down and storing materials from the bulletin board.

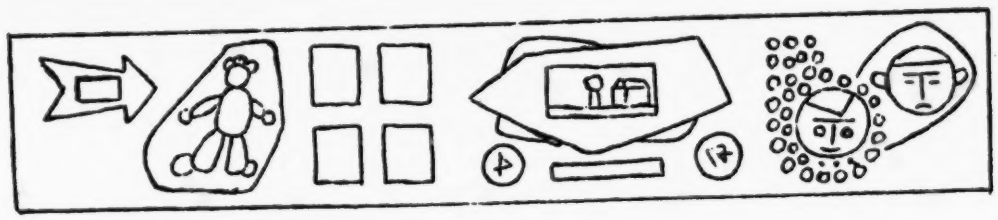
## Suggestions for the Teacher

- Change bulletin board displays frequently. The length of time the arrangement is up depends upon its content or purpose. Displays used for teaching purposes may have a longer interest than displays of pictorial material.
- Do not retain holiday displays after the holiday is over.
- Keep a file of materials suitable for display.
- Bulletin board space should be filled but not crowded.
- The arrangement should be unified, but there should be variety within it.
- Lines, colors and shapes should lead your eye into the arrangement and not out of it.
- When mounting pictures, the bottom margins are usually the widest. For a square picture, top and side margins should be equal. For a vertical rectangle, top margin should be wider than side margin. For horizontal rectangles, side margins should be wider than top.
- Arrange the objects asymmetrically. Do not "stand 'em in a straight line." The arrangement should balance, but it will be more interesting if it is not symmetrical.

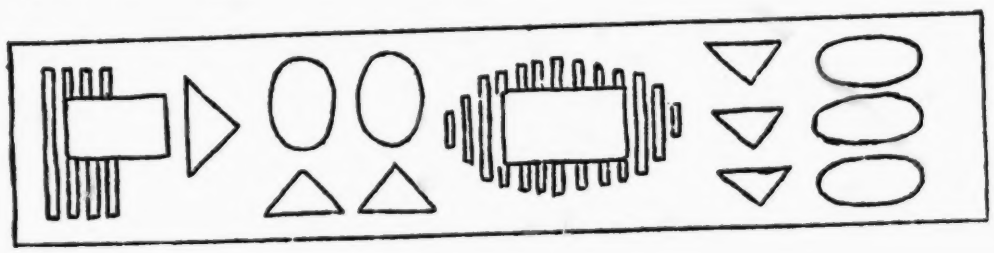


• Do not measure for accurate arrangement. Just use eye judgment; any irregularities will improve rather than spoil the display.

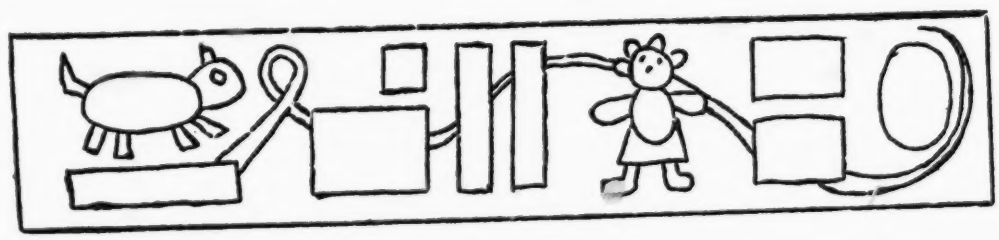
• Printed materials, small objects and important items are frequently shown with greater effect if they are placed upon a background that causes them to "stand out." Irregular shapes sometimes make interesting background because they attract attention. A background can be made from many materials. It does not always need to be paper or cardboard in solid pieces. You can use aluminum foil, corrugated cardboard, string, yarn, bottle caps, cloth, cork sheets, burlap and many other things. Yarn, paper strips, string and bottle caps can be put together so that they form a shape.



• The display should be tied together and appear as a total unit rather than as a series of completely separate parts. If one color, texture or shape is repeated throughout the display, it will help to unify the arrangement.



• String or yarn can also help to tie an exhibit together.



• Sometimes it is interesting to place more emphasis upon one part of a display than upon other parts. This can be done with bright colors, contrast, unusual shapes, etc.

• Nothing is more uninteresting or mundane than a series of mimeographed pictures on display. They have no place in contemporary art education.

• Labeling is important. It can make or break a display. In general, it is advisable to be as brief as possible, but be sure that any necessary explanations are clear.

• Try some of the following ideas for labeling:[1]

Keep in your file a set of sample block letters of various sizes cut from tagboard to serve as patterns.

Use a variety of interesting papers for your lettering. Use cloth, wire, yarn, rope, string or straws.

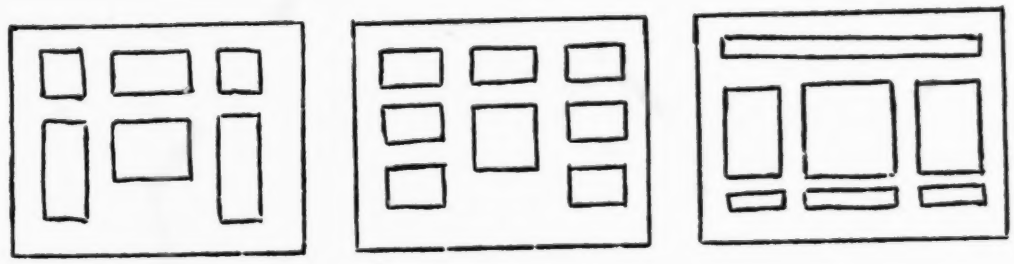
Give texture to letters by covering them with organdy, burlap or sandpaper.

Do your printing with a variety of materials such as crayons, brushes, lettering pens, felt pens or typewriters.

Try lettering with the points or sides of crayons and then cut out the letters.

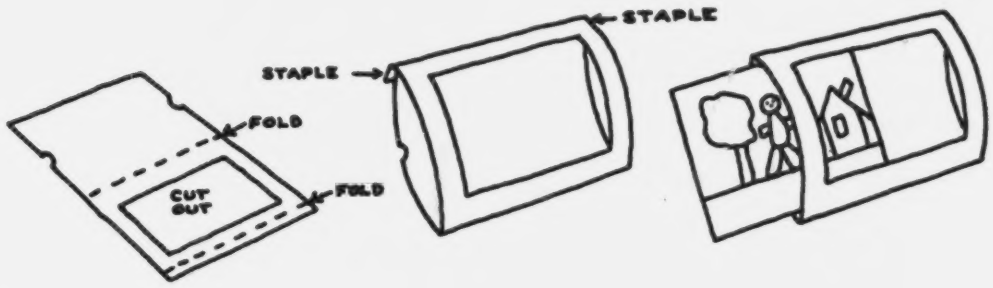
Letter with crayons and then paint over the letters with watercolor or India Ink.

• Drawings and paintings can remain unmounted, but mounting or framing helps to make a display more attractive. Airplane glue, paste or various colored tapes can be used to fasten pictures to colored construction paper, Bristol board or Oak tag.

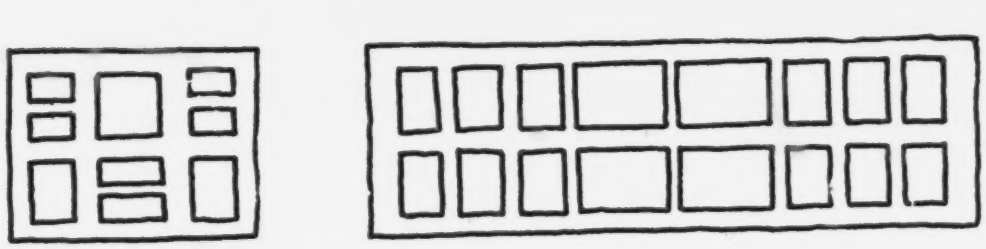


[1] Elaine La Tronico and Martha Roderick, *Bulletin Board Arrangement* (Denver: Department of Public Instruction, Public Schools, 1950-51).

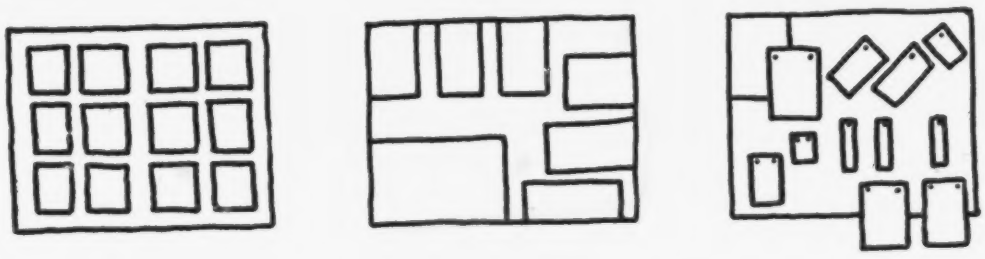
• An easily constructed frame that can be used many times is especially helpful. Cut, fold and staple a piece of Oak tag so that painting of a standard size can be slipped in and out.



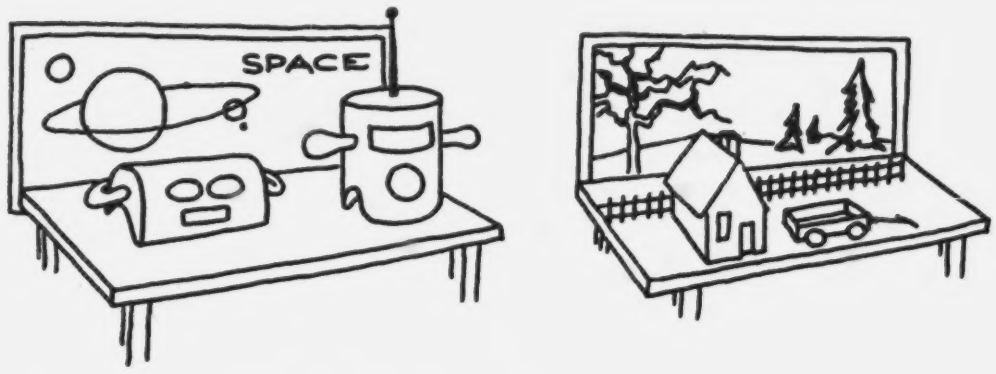

• Although not as interesting as asymmetrical designs, the formal, symmetrical type can be used. Here is an example:



• In general, it is a good idea to avoid the following arrangements:

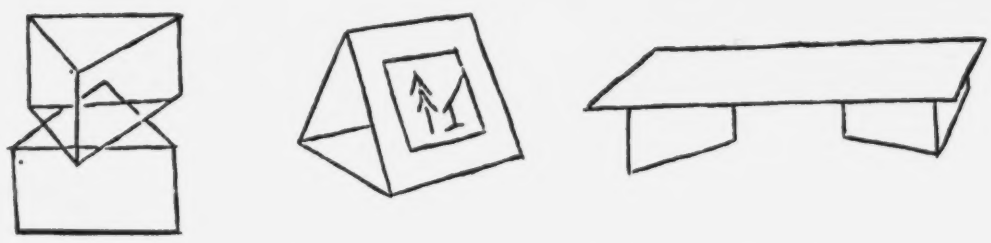


• A table and a bulletin board can be combined in a display.



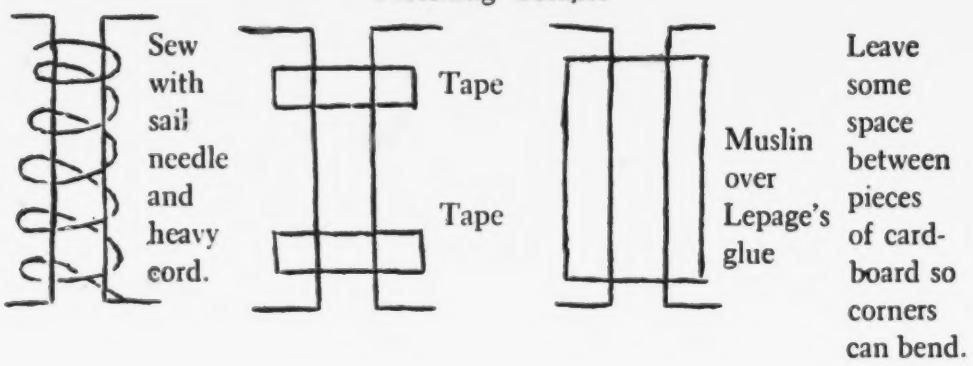

**Display Units Where no Bulletin Board Space Exists**

These displays can be constructed using free and inexpensive materials. If these suggestions seem too difficult for you and the children in your class, perhaps you could ask your art teacher for a helping hand.

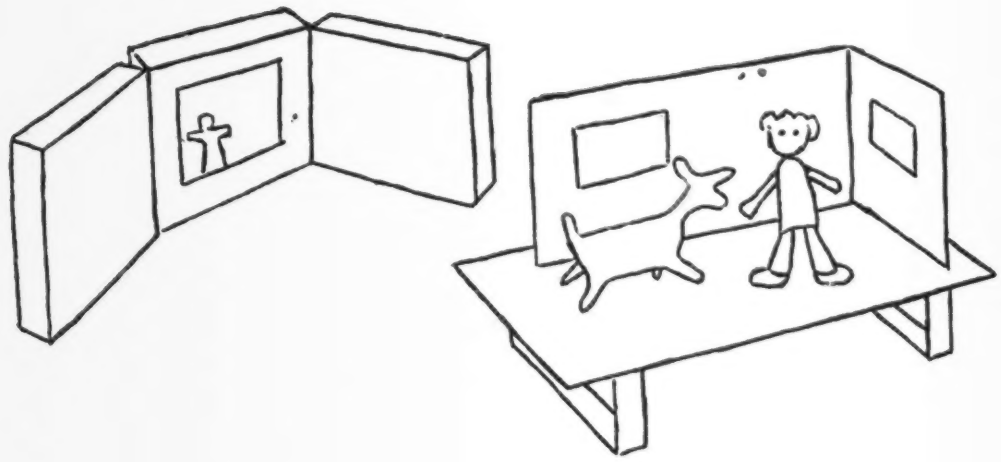


Small triangular cardboard units made from cardboard boxes.

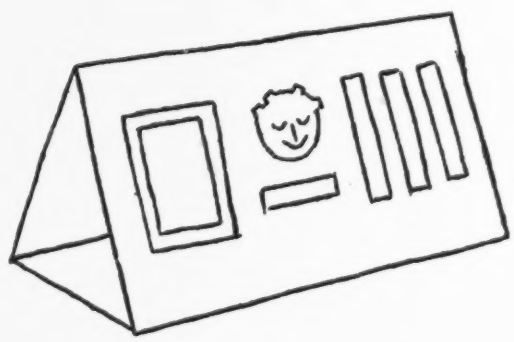
Fastening Corners

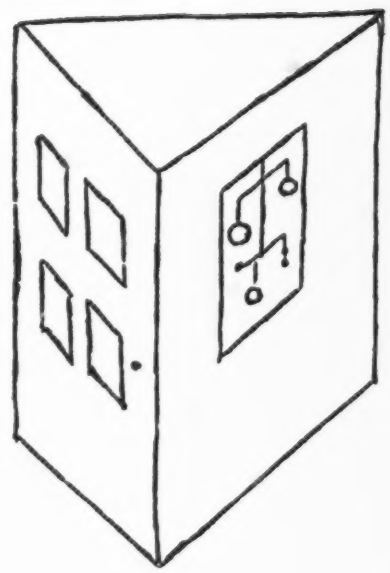

Sew with sail needle and heavy cord.
Tape
Tape
Muslin over Lepage's glue
Leave some space between pieces of card-board so corners can bend.

Cardboard boxes can be put together to form puppet stages or display units.



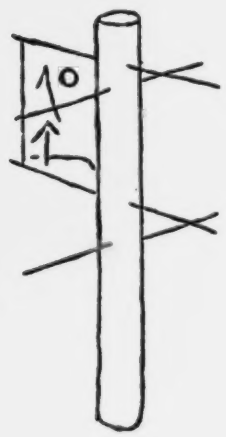
Large triangular units can be made from cardboard mattress boxes. They can be used to display pictures, or mobiles can be suspended from them. If one corner is opened, they can be used for the presentation of puppet shows.



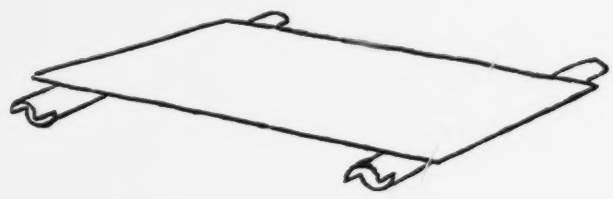


Cardboard tubes (large ones) can be obtained from rug stores and used for display purposes.

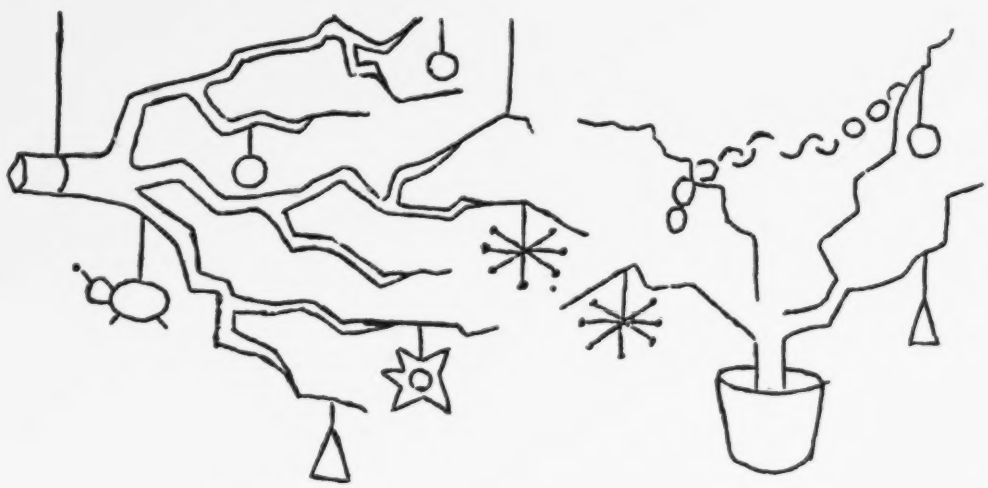
These tubes can sometimes reach from floor to ceiling. Dowels stuck through them can support drawings, mobiles or artificial branches. Just think, you can have children build a palm tree to shade you as you sit at your desk!



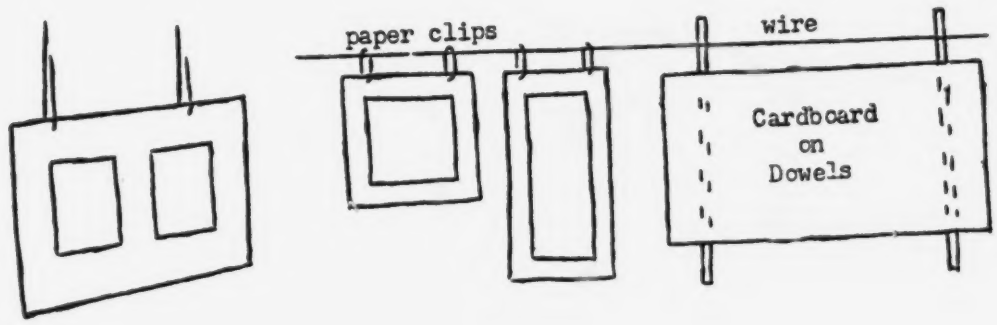
If the ends of the tubes are cut properly, they can be placed on chairs or desks to form a support for big pieces of cardboard or wallboard.



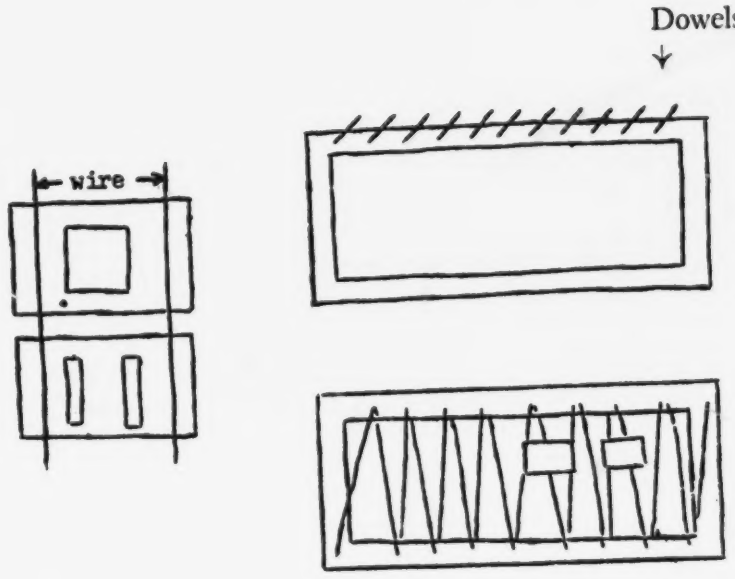
Limbs can stand on the floor or suspend from the ceiling. They can be painted white, gold, silver, etc.; various art objects can be hung from them. They can be beautiful.



Pictures can be mounted on wallboard and suspended from ceiling or from wires.




Blackboard Display




String over blackboard

Orange crate covered with corrugated cardboard

It is interesting to place emphasis upon one part of display. This can be done with bright colors, contrast or unusual shapes. Small pictures are placed low for close-up study.

The arrangement should be unified but have variety within it.

This question stimulates research with realistic visual aids and books which are made easily accessible below the bulletin.

Pictures on bulletin boards are reference for diorama-making in the intermediate grades.

This bulletin board raises questions. The display table below the bulletin contains reference materials.

# Sources for Help

## Who Helps?

N. Louise Gex

*"People and helpful organizations . . . are potential sources of assistance in securing materials and facilities needed for quality teaching."*

Fortunate are the pupils and happy are the teachers who live and learn in a classroom planned and built to meet educational specifications! Most children and teachers are not so fortunate, and much must be done to create a stimulating learning environment—beginning with four walls, screwed-down desks and seats, and a teacher's desk of traditional, nondescript design.

A reservoir of untapped energy, goodwill and real desire to help the schools is at our fingertips. Often it is as near as the telephone, the neighbor across the street, or a letter to a service club. All that may be lacking between a meager learning environment and a few extra facilities for teaching which can make "all the difference" is knowing what is needed and letting the right person know what it is and how to get it.

Who are these resource persons and organizations who are eager and willing or who may be persuaded to serve their children and their schools? They are boards of education, superintendents, principals, fellow teachers and parents whose common interests and support we have a right to expect. They are organized groups ranging from the Parent Teacher Association to the service club with an active welfare and educational committee.

Once ideas for space-savers, equipment and teaching materials have been conceived, it becomes an operation which might be called *Let Them Know*.

**Let the principal know and through him the board of education.**

Boards of education are genuinely interested in quality teaching. They are aware of the fact that a bare classroom and a well-qualified teacher are not all that are needed to make the best environment for promoting a rich curriculum. When they understand the uses to which materials are to be placed, they will make real sacrifices to see that space-savers, equipment and materials for a good school program are available.

Learn the channels and procedures for ordering. Obtain catalogs and know items, source, quality and price. Make ordering so easy that any inconvenience to another cannot possibly be an obstacle to obtaining what is urgently needed. Do not let it be truthfully said about your faculty: "I

have to urge the teachers in our building to order their full quota of educational supplies. They seem to be satisfied with what they have on hand."

Good management through the year frequently leaves a surplus which could be spent for current needs. Meet regular schedules for ordering with well-planned orders. Be alert for off-schedule opportunities when extra orders may be possible within budget allocations.

In these days of building demands, teacher shortages and rising costs of materials, tax monies do not always stretch far enough to include the many desirable teaching aids so urgently needed. But keep your eyes on the important objectives. Organize and plan by grade levels, as a total staff and as individuals. Remember that more adequate use of facilities follows cooperative planning for securing the facilities. Make out priority lists and ask, ask, ask!

Principals are educational leaders and will aid and facilitate the program all the way. For a few who may need information, conviction and stimulation, devise a concerted program of indoctrination. Carry them along every step of the way.

**Let the other teachers know.**

How many have had the experience of telling Sallie-Next-Door, "Teaching would be my life's work if I just had a chart holder," to learn that Sallie had an extra one and that furthermore there were several good easels in the storeroom on the third floor? Teachers working together and pooling their ideas and resources can move mountains! They have frequently discovered gold in an educational wasteland. A little diligent prospecting can make the difference.

Much can be accomplished by teachers working together by grade levels. With care and planning, a rotation and exchange plan can be worked out whereby the same materials can serve two and three classes in the same grade. Books and equipment are not serving children when they are not being used. Everyone recognizes the importance of having basic equipment and materials available in sufficient quantity to serve every child, but there are many items which can be exchanged and rotated, those things which are common property and can serve more than one group of children.

Teachers can plan together by grade levels, units (primary, intermediate and upper) and/or as whole faculty groups to help secure adequate teaching materials. Certain routines can be delegated and total staff time saved for more creative planning.

**Let the Parent Teacher Association know.**

Each year Parent Teacher Associations throughout the nation spend time, effort and money in their program of serving their children and their schools.

Are we, the teacher division of this organization, doing our part to channel this tremendous effort into projects which have merit and enduring qualities? Is too much going into feeding individuals (children and adults) who are already a bit overfed, rather than into feeding the mind? If your PTA told your school that a certain amount of money was available to spend for each room, would you be ready with definite suggestions which would add to quality teaching in those classrooms for the next few years?

Encourage Parent Teacher Associations to promote the goals of their organizations. For those groups who desire service projects, be ready to channel this effort into definite projects in line with the needs of a rich learning environment for every classroom.

**Let parents, room mothers and other friends of the school know.**

Many parents have unsuspected talents and abilities. An inventory of parents as resource persons for the school will reveal many possible avenues for enriching the school learning environment. Many homes of today contain a variety of power tools and do-it-yourself workshops in which useful teaching aids can be constructed by parents in their homes. The use of parent-paint crews to redecorate the room play corner is not new in many schools. Such helpful service to the schools deepens the ties between parents and the schools, ties which are urgently needed for continued school support.

**Let the industrial arts teacher know.**

The industrial arts teacher in the elementary school or in the neighboring high school is an important person to know. His special interests and skills can be the means of supplying many educational facilities and services for all the classrooms. He and the students in his classes can furnish various types of advice and assistance. In one city system,* the Industrial Arts Department and classroom teachers devised a list of projects and services which could be arranged in cooperation with industrial arts teachers. These items were planned to serve and enhance the regular school curriculum. In some instances, when there was need for wide duplication, working models or sample projects were designed and constructed. A partial list of those projects and services are given here to suggest the wealth of possibilities which can be explored:

| *Science* | *Arithmetic* | *Social Studies* |
|---|---|---|
| planting boxes | place holder device | models |
| animal cages | individual counter | mock-ups |
| working models | fraction board | *Others* |
| simple machines | abacus | games for rainy days |

* Kansas City, Missouri, Public Schools.

*Other Teaching Aids*

chart holder
puppet stage
diorama mountings
peep show containers
flannel board
photographs of activities
staff lines (music)
installations
portable containers for paint jars

**Let the service clubs know.**

Too many times organizations approach the schools with a ready-made project, usually a contest, which they want to promote in the schools. While some of these have merit, many are not in line with sound educational goals and consume time and energy of students and teachers which are urgently needed in other endeavors. Leadership, thought and planning could reverse this procedure. The schools could be ready with pre-planned projects which could be offered to service clubs and organizations who sincerely want to serve their schools. These projects could range from an educational trip for all sixth graders to an extra film projector for the second floor.

**Let other resource persons know.**

There are many resource persons in and out of the school who have special competencies. These skills and abilities are frequently in line with the need for classroom materials and supplies.

There is the homemaking teacher and the need for curtains, paint aprons and many other aids including pictures of period costumes.

There are the art and music specialists who can give assistance and advice in their own and many related areas.

There are the school custodian and the cafeteria manager. The custodian is frequently equipped to assist with installations and the making of improvised facilities. Much teaching equipment can be obtained from discarded boxes and containers from the school cafeteria.

And the children, do not forget to involve the children in each classroom! Many generous children and their families can establish a library corner and furnish many other teaching aids loaned to the classroom for the period of time needed.

No teacher needs to be forever limited to meager facilities for teaching. "Doing what you can, where you are, with what you have" is the day-by-day job of the teacher. Do not forget that "what you have" includes many wonderful people and helpful organizations in each school community. All of these are potential sources of assistance in securing materials and facilities needed for quality teaching.

# Sources for Equipment and Materials

ALBERTA L. MEYER

**Books**

East, Marjorie. *Display for Learning.* New York: Dryden Press, 31 W. 54th St., 1952. $3.

Johnston, Mary Grace. *Paper Sculpture.* Worcester 8, Mass: The Davis Press, Inc., Printers' Building.

**Pamphlets and Bulletins**

*Art for Children's Growing.* Washington, D. C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 15th St., N.W., 1955. Pp. 48. 75c.

*Baited Bulletin Boards,* by Koskey and Lick. San Francisco 15: Fearon Publishers, 2450 Fillmore St. $1.

*Bridges for Ideas Series.* Austin 12: University of Texas, Visual Instruction Bureau, Division of Extension. Each $1.

#1 Tear Sheets for Teaching
#2 Bulletin Boards for Teaching
#3 Feltboards for Teaching
#4 Lettering Techniques

*Bulletin Board Arrangement,* by Elaine La Tronico and Martha Roderick. Denver: Department of Public Instruction, Public Schools, 1950-51.

*Equipment and Supplies.* Washington, D. C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 15th St., N. W., 1957. Pp. 90. $1.25.

*Free and Inexpensive Reference Materials* (mimeographed). Kutztown, Penna.: Eastern Arts Association, State Teachers College. 35¢. Contains long list of free or inexpensive exhibits for children.

*How Many, How Much, How Small.* Sandusky, Ohio: Educational Department, American Crayon Co. 50¢.

**Pictures** (Write for catalogs.)

*Artext Prints, Inc.,* Westport, Conn. Art reproductions and large primary pictures.

*Arthur Barr Productions,* San Encino Abbey, 6211 Arroyo Glen, Los Angeles 42, Calif. Black and white photographs correlated with films.

*Exhibitions of photographs on art subjects.* One week. Pay transportation from previous place of exhibit. Life Exhibitions, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20.

*Holiday Information Service,* Independence Square, Philadelphia 5, Penna. Cartographs: Picture-maps from *Holiday* in single, unfolded sheets, suitable for framing. 10¢ each, postage prepaid. Order by number:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| HOL—101 | Spring Wildflowers | HOL—105 | Animal Kingdom |
| HOL—102 | Indian Lore | HOL—106 | Migratory Birds |
| HOL—103 | National Parks | HOL—121 | Revolution Revisited |

*Informative Classroom Pictures*, Grand Rapids 2, Mich. Black and white illustrations for elementary and high school social studies.

*National Audubon Society*, 1000 5th Ave., New York 28. Photographs of birds and other nature subjects.

*National Geographic Society*, 16th and M Sts., N.W., Washington 6, D. C. Color and black and white photographs of many geographical subjects.

*Konrad Prothman*, 7 Soper Ave., Baldwin, Long Island, N. Y. Art reproductions of excellent quality.

**Films**

*Feltboard in Teaching*. Detroit: Wayne State University, 1951. 9 min., sound, color, $75.

*Better Bulletin Boards*. Bloomington: Indiana University, 1956. 13 min., sound, black and white, $50; color, $100.

*Chalkboard Utilization*. Young America, 1954. New York 36: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 330 W. 42nd St. 15 min., sound, black and white, $80.

**Filmstrips**

*Improving the Use of the Chalkboard*. Columbus: Ohio State University, 1956. 44 frames, silent with captions, color, $4.

*How to Make and Use the Feltboard*. Columbus: Ohio State University, 1955. 53 frames, silent with captions, color, $4.

*How to Keep Your Bulletin Board Alive*. Columbus: Ohio State University, 1950. 32 frames, silent with captions, color, $4.

A *Science Classroom*. Popular Science, 1950. New York 36: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 330 W. 42nd St. 50 frames, silent with captions, color, $6.

*School Buildings 1957*. Washington, D. C.: AASA, 1201 16th St., N.W. 128 frames, silent with script, color, $6. School Building Exhibit.

**Portfolios, Exhibits and Slides**

*Delaware Art Center Educational Department*. 51 portfolios, 49 exhibits, 28 slide sets. Catalog free. Pay transportation and insurance both ways on exhibits, 50¢ weekly for slides. Museums and organizations outside Delaware: annual flat $5 fee, transportation and insurance both ways.

**Textiles**

To make a simple, attractive wall hanging, buy appropriate prints or interesting textured weaves in drapery, upholstery or yard good departments. Watch for remnant sales. Hem or bind with appropriate color. Certain textiles may be fringed, depending on subject and texture.

**Kit**

*Science Kit*. Tonawanda, N. Y.: Box 69. Box containing 80 items of basic equipment for elementary science experiments. Instruction book. $36.

# Beauty Around Us

## —Classrooms That Invite Learning

LUCIE ANN MCCALL

*"When [the teacher] adds imagination, creativity and visual awareness, the room will take on an aura of beauty."*

MAKING THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT ATTRACTIVE TO CHILDREN IS A generally accepted responsibility in schools today. Every classroom is different, every teacher is unique, and there is certainly no uniformity in educational experiences. The teacher's best guide is his understanding of children, their interests and their growth needs. When he adds imagination, creativity and visual awareness, the room will take on an aura of beauty.

A classroom will have little meaning or appeal for children if they have not participated in making it beautiful. Often the teacher does not see its educational possibilities. He likes to get his room "all fixed up" at the beginning of the semester so he will not have to worry about it for six or eight weeks. He tacks visual aid materials on the bulletin board for the social study unit; he arranges tables or desks with symmetry and precision; he hangs up pictures; he brings in a plant or bouquet for his desk. This teacher thinks education begins *after* the room is fixed up. No matter how clean, orderly or even artistic such a room may seem at a surface glance, it is cold and sterile. Children will be less interested and less willing to give it care when they have had little part in creating it.

The modern teacher believes that true learning grows out of life situations and that it can begin as soon as the group assembles. He feels that good citizenship habits and attitudes develop when children work together to improve their environment. Therefore, he involves children in planning room arrangement, in deciding when it is suitable to have desks in rows and when it is better to place them in groups. He helps them feel the need for a mural, paintings, panel designs, mobiles to add gaiety and color. He encourages them to bring their collections and treasures. In his room one would never find faded, dusty, unfinished pictures lying around on tables or window sills; paint cans with brushes left in the dried-up paint; wilted plants; battered books; and chalk dust everywhere. Such carelessness would be completely out of harmony with the kind of life that goes on in his room.

From what we know today about child growth, we believe the school environment should be cheerful, interesting and stimulating. It should be a place where children can think, study and discuss matters of interest.

It should be equipped for group activities in science, the arts and social living. It should also be at times a serene environment for listening to poetry and music, for creative writing and painting, for silent reading, for research. The child's classroom should be a place where he learns the joy of work.

If we accept the school as the child's place of business we know it will not look like a home. It will have a very special look of its own. Modern school architecture has recognized this. The new buildings with the many low windows that bring in controlled light and vision of the outside world; with functional walls and floors that will not be harmed by activity and materials used; with flexible furniture that fits the child's physical and social needs; with color and variety of textures in the combination of wood, brick and glass are beautiful workshops for children.

Sometimes a teacher in the new school finds it difficult to accept the simplicity of the design. To him the room looks bare—and he is apt to make the mistake of "gilding the lily." Carried away with enthusiasm he overloads the room with decoration—two plants when one would do, sculpture of poor taste on every table, drapes to soften the effect. The room soon loses its workshop charm.

An old school building may lack many of the new school's assets, but there often are advantages if we look for them. Rooms may be larger. They may have a mellow lived-in look. To make such a school attractive requires more imagination, creativity and effort on the part of the teacher and his group. Their classroom can become highly personal, individual and expressive, and it too can be a workshop.

I have seen uninviting classrooms in new schools and beautiful inspiring classrooms in impaired, old buildings. It all depends on the teacher: his visual awareness, imagination, creativity and his understanding of children. There are always simple things he can do to make the classroom a better place in which to live. Let us consider a few.

**Pictures**

It would be desirable to have in every classroom one good picture, well framed and hung on the child's eye level. Color prints of great artists' works are now available at small expense.

Guidance in the selection of pictures should come from the school art department.

If the teacher cannot procure funds for a color print from the board of education or from the Parent Teacher Association, he need not feel too concerned. In his classroom are thirty or more budding young artists who will meet the need if they are encouraged. Pictures made by children should always be given an honored place in the school. They should be changed

often. Every child should contribute. When mounted on mats of uniform size they add interest, color, gaiety and a feeling of order to the room.

It is regrettable that any teacher would prefer magazine pictures, advertising art, travel posters or traced symbols of the seasons for decorating the room. Such preference is an unconscious rejection of the child. It indicates a lack of faith in his ability to produce. It also reveals the teacher's limited understanding of child development.

**Growing Things**

Every classroom should have growing things. With foresight this can be accomplished with small expense. Bulbs can be potted for controlled blooming. If light and space do not permit one can choose other gifts from the world of nature.

In September goldenrod, Queen Anne's lace and wild asters are usually available. Children can take turns bringing garden flowers. Selecting the proper container and making the arrangements should be done by a committee of children, by an interested parent, and at other times by the teacher himself.

Arranging flowers is an art. When finished there should be good design with variety in sizes and shapes, repetition of color, and an order that expresses qualities felt in the flower. Sturdy plants such as zinnias look well in pottery. Delicate flowers such as violets and roses usually look better in glass. However, there are no absolutes in design and the best way is to experiment and make arrangements that give visual pleasure.

After the frost has taken the flowers, the group can find faded grasses, dock, teasel, milkweed and other nature forms. Their textures; the interesting shapes of the seed pods; the rich somber tones of cream, beige and russet should become a source of enjoyment when brought to the children's attention. A branch of autumn leaves can add a note of brilliant color to a room. The leaves of the beech and oak continue to cling to the branch and will remain beautiful long after the brilliance of color has gone. The satiny brown horse chestnuts which children treasure and bring to school in bulging pockets look beautiful piled high on a nest of autumn leaves in a low wooden bowl.

A large purple eggplant, a head of red cabbage, green peppers, carrots and dried onions grouped on a woven raffia mat are as wonderful to look at as orchids or roses. And wouldn't a low basket of bright red well-polished apples delight the eye? Children can contribute such materials, enjoy their esthetic qualities all week and on Friday have a party and "eat them up"!

During the winter months there is the magic of Christmas greens. An earthen jar filled with branches from the many kinds of Christmas trees would be both handsome and educational. At Christmas tree sale lots, attendants are generous with waste branches when a school needs them.

Later in the season one large bare branch in a pottery vase can be silhouetted against a background of plain color that will reveal its grace. Placed in a vase with water, it will put forth buds which the children can watch unfold. Pussy willows, forsythia and horse chestnut are particularly rewarding in this way.

In every room there should be an aquarium or a terrarium—or both if space permits. When we also provide a magnifying glass we open a whole new world of wonder and beauty for the child. He grows and grows in his power of observation. Joy in really seeing the heart of a flower, the unfolding buds, the movement and flash of color in the fish bowl deepens his appreciation of the great gifts of the good earth.

**Children's Treasures**

Dear to every child's heart are his collections—the things he finds, values and wants to share. A dead butterfly, shells brought home from the seashore, fossils from the gravel pit, Indian arrowheads, feathers, a black diamond, fool's gold are typical. Often such objects have exquisite color and jewel-like patterns. A table or low shelves should be provided so they can be well displayed and not scattered all over the room. If the children are mature enough they should make attractive labels with information. These exhibits develop curiosity. They may lead to rich study and research. They inspire other children to use their leisure time constructively. They also furnish additional notes of beauty for the classroom.

**Books**

Textbooks are not always beautiful and inspiring. In every classroom there should be several well-designed books suitable to the age level of the children. Cover designs, illustrations, print and content should be carefully considered. Through such books we help children to appreciate all good books.

**Bulletin Boards**

Bulletin boards present a problem. They usually indicate the main theme of interest and experience going on in the room. Clippings and pictures from newspapers and magazines, visual aids, art work—all have to be assembled in a simple, direct design placed on the child's eye level. Sometimes swatches of colored paper can be used to unify the design and make it more colorful.

One area of the bulletin board should be for the children. They should contribute items of interest and do their arranging—with guidance.

Bulletin boards should be changed often. Visual aids will not be looked at when interests change. Just as a shopkeeper whets the customer's interest with changing window displays so will a live, frequently changed bulletin board whet and direct the interests of children.

**Windows**

Windows are for light. They also give a feeling of space and freedom. They bring the sky, trees, flowers, grass into the classroom. Their distant views are restful to the eyes after close work.

The practice of pasting paper tulips, snowflakes, butterflies and stars on the window glass violates their true purpose. Another practice that should be carefully considered is bringing in plants to carry them through the winter. Mangy looking plants are depressing. Unless they enhance the charm of the room or are being used for educational purposes, they should not be given space.

**Entrance**

Welcome should begin at the room entrance. A small colorful bulletin board or a display window with children's art work, a well-designed toy, sea shells will attract interest and set a happy tone. A card with the teacher's name and grade should be mounted on the door to help parents and other visitors. Much originality can be used in decorating such cards. I recently saw a charming large one decorated with children's self portraits above the teacher's name.

**Self Evaluation**

It would be of benefit to every teacher if he would occasionally sit down at the close of the day and take a clear-eyed unbiased look at his room. Let us do so now. Just lean back, relax and let me guide your eyes and thoughts.

What is in this room that isn't really needed, that has outlived its use, that could be discarded?

Isn't that table getting rather cluttered? Maybe some of the treasures should be returned tomorrow.

Do we really need that calendar? Nice of the milk company to send it—but isn't the one the children made enough?

That health poster—hasn't it had its day? And over here is one on safety. We discussed that two weeks ago. I wonder how long posters should be pinned up to have real value?

Wasn't that mural made last year? Wonder how the children feel about it? They didn't make it!

How about that old sepia print way up there near the ceiling? Wonder if we would lose our jobs if we quietly stored it in the school attic?

That bouquet of bittersweet brought in last fall has certainly lost its glory. I'd say "it's for the birds"!

Gym shoes, gym shoes, always underfoot! Why not have the children make colorful shoe bags during art period? They would look gay hanging up in the wardrobe.

Those alphabet cards over the blackboard—always so somber, always coming unpinned. I have heard there is a new kind that can be used on the desks. Any chance of finding some?

Doesn't that bulletin board look wild—not a single spot left for eye rest!

And the children's drawings and paintings—I love them too, but don't you agree that having them on all four walls is a little overpowering? Why not use that section down there and put up about a dozen or fifteen and change them often?

Now please don't be angry, but just take a peek at that window sill—a milk bottle, two paint boxes, a gum paper, a pair of mittens! Organization trouble? Or housekeeping? Or both?

Wasn't this room arrangement made last September? Don't you think a change would be restful? How about moving your desk to the rear of the room—or over there where you can see the blue sky once in a while? You can always move it back if you don't like it.

Now let us take a "break" and return to the room in the role of visitors. Pause at the doorway. What kind of a first impression does it make? Please do not worry about those little scraps of raffia and yarn, or that smudge of squashed red chalk on the floor. Those are just honorable trademarks of a good workshop. Instead let us look for the spirit of the room. What does it express? Does it welcome us or does the furniture block the entrance and the color scheme frown upon us? Children receive this impact every time they enter it.

It might also be wise for us to take a good look at ourselves too. How do we rate in appeal? In a school I once visited, under the teacher's name on the door card was written in a bouncy childish scrawl, "This is the goodest teacher." I entered the room and was soon in complete agreement. The teacher was not young but the spirit of her classroom was definitely!

A teacher spends almost one third of his professional life in a classroom. Surely he owes it to himself and the children to live that amount of time in an environment of order and quality! A statement made by John Dewey expresses this thought forcefully:

> "The noblest man living in a desert absorbs something of its harshness and sterility, while the nostalgia of the mountain bred man when cut off from his surroundings is proof how deeply environment has become part of his being. Neither the savage nor civilized man is what he is by native constitution but by the culture in which he participates. The final measure of that culture is the arts which flourish." *

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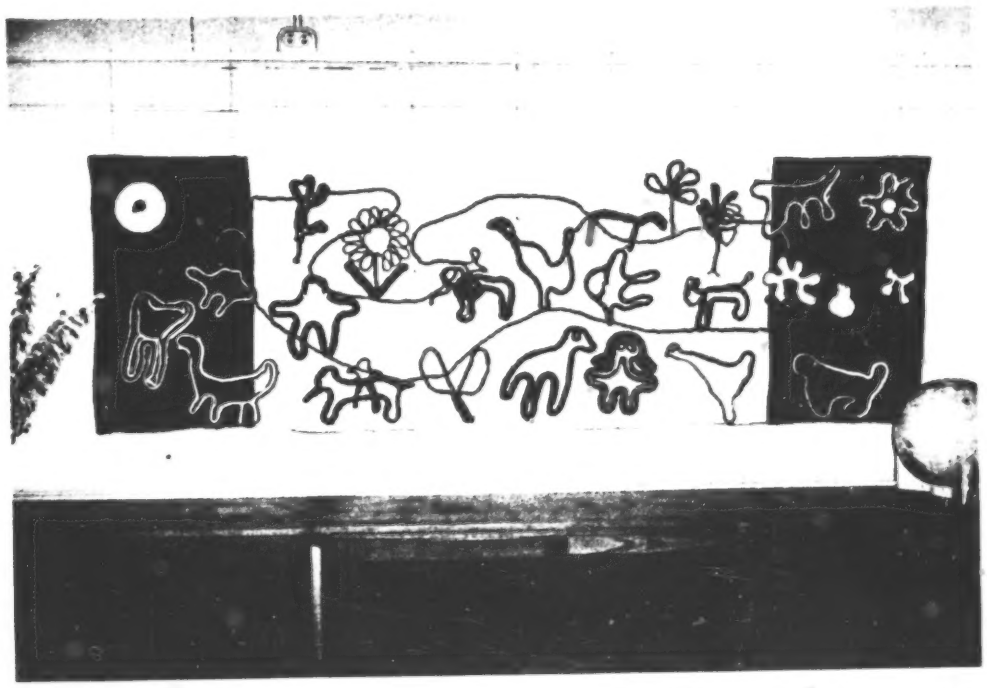
* John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Minton, Balch & Co., subsidiary of Putnam & Co., 1934), p. 345.

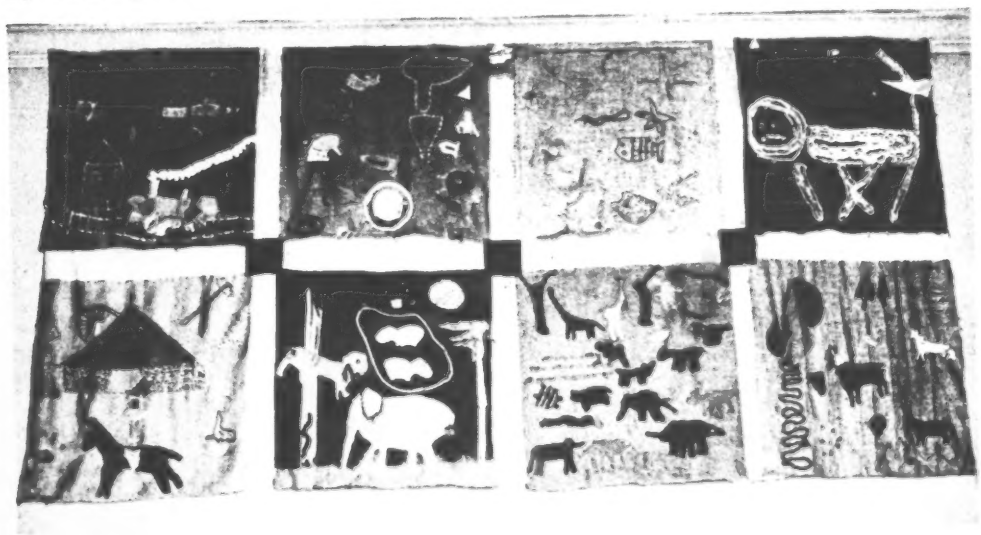
## Burlap Hangings



By third and fourth graders

Discussion of different kinds of designs was the first step in making hangings. In the top hanging, each child made individual designs by dipping roving in thin paste and permitting it to dry. Later each design was sewed on burlap, using warp-colored thread and a big-eyed sharp needle. In the bottom hanging, each child first drew a chalk picture. The pictures were then embroidered with colored yarn and roving. Each plaque was connected by strips of heavy yellow cotton. Colored felt and sateen were used for the appliqué. Green-fringed burlap made the grass. The art teacher helped in selection of materials and in placement of designs.

By second graders



Some

## ACEI Publications

of General Interest

**Bibliography of Books for Children—37**
1965 rev. Selected list—annotated, classified, priced; age levels. 132pp. $1.50

**Children and Today's World—19-A**
Scholarly, reflective articles by 7 authorities in different disciplines who have looked at children in light of their own special knowledge. 68pp. $1.25

**Children's Books—for $1.50 or Less—36**
1967 rev. Classified list of inexpensive, approved books. 48pp. 75¢

**Creative Dramatics—2-A**
Values; examples of how and what to use in classroom; recreational therapy in rehabilitation center for gifted and retarded; how teachers help each other; refs.; ill. 48pp. 75¢

**Equipment and Supplies—39**
1964 rev. Lists of materials for nurs., kgdn., prim., interm.; classified lists of tested and approved products, age level, manufacturers; index. 124pp. $1.50

**Homework—9-A**
Home, laboratory for creative experiences. Many kinds of assigned homework related to schoolwork. Classroom uses of home TV viewing. Bib. Ill. 40pp. $1.00

**Individualizing Education—11-A**
Individual differences, creativity. Individualized instruction in 3 R's. Uniqueness of teacher; administrator's role. 64pp. $1.25

**Intermediate Education—15-A**
Curriculum areas, grouping, logical thinking, social studies, reading, new math, science, esthetics, values, experiences. Emphasis upon individual. 80pp. $1.25

**Literature with Children—3-A**
Providing stories, classics, choral reading, storytelling, poetry, creative experiences, audiovisual materials, balanced contacts with literature; records and independent reading; stories and curriculum; librarian's role; coping with comics. Refs. 56pp. 75¢

**More About Reading—29**
Articles from ACEI publications on individualized reading, self-selection; focus on base broader than traditional. 32pp. 50¢

**Primary Education—14-A**
Emphasis on learner's experience, self-concept, perceptions, levels of thinking. Trends in reading, math, social studies. 76pp. $1.25

**Reading—98**
Individual differences; need for varied experiences, materials; reading for meaning, information, pleasure; self-selection. 32pp. 75¢

**Songs Children Like—Folk Songs from Many Lands—63**
Songs (71) of out-of-doors, fun, action, seasons. 48pp. 75¢

**Toward Better Kindergartens—18-A**
Chairman of ACEI Kindergarten Committee and 9 educators discuss kindergarten teacher's responsibilities; priorities in early childhood education; interaction of children, parents teachers; kindergarten facilities; language arts; self-selection and self-direction. 64pp. $1.25

### *Leaflets*

**Basic Propositions for Early Childhood Education—I**
Individual differences; beginning years; responsibilities of teachers, parents, administrators. 12pp. 25¢ ea.; 10 copies, $2

**Color Book Craze, The—F**
Creative as opposed to readymade in art for children. 8pp. 10¢ ea.; 25 copies, $2

**Effective Learning and Teacher-Pupil Ratio—CE-1**
Alice V. Keliher, publications chairman, presents ACEI's position on class size and cites studies supporting it. From September 1966 CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. 4pp. 10¢ ea.; 25 copies, $2

**Guide to Children's Magazines, Newspapers, Reference Books—B**
Annotated list of children's magazines, newspapers, ref. books. For parents and teachers. 8pp. 10¢ ea.; 25 copies, $2

### *Books*

**Feelings and Learning**
Five educators discuss how feelings are interwoven into many areas of children's development. More than 100 photos. 96pp. $5.95

**Readings from Childhood Education: Articles of Lasting Value**
Eighty articles selected from first 40 years of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. 416pp. $3.75 (paperback)

**Seventy-five Years of Concerns for Children**
By Winifred E. Bain. History of the Association for Childhood Education International 1892-1967; published in conjunction with Association's 75th Anniversary. Includes *Half a Century of Progress*, by Ira L. Smith. 96pp. $2.75 (paperback)

The above publications may be ordered directly from

**The Association for Childhood Education International**
**3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016**

A complete publications list with membership information will be sent upon request. (Orders of less than $2 must be accompanied by check or money order payable to ACEI.)

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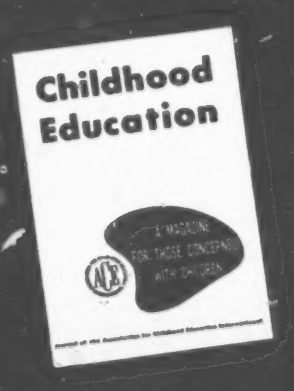


CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ACEI's Official journal): Brings you each month professional articles, editorials, reviews and news notes. Published monthly, September through May. Membership (includes subscription to magazine with the *Branch Exchange* inserted) 1 Yr. $6, 2 Yrs. $11.

Annual Bulletin Order (includes the ACEI Yearbook and all bulletins and leaflets published during the year) $10.